

PLO, World Bank clear way for projects

TUNIS (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organization and the World Bank have reached several agreements to start financing development projects in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, a senior PLO official said. The agreements are related to the budget of a Palestinian economic council which is to manage international aid for the reconstruction of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Farouk Kaddoumi, the PLO's "foreign minister" and vice-president of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, said he signed the deals with World Bank official Ram Chopra at the end of a two-day meeting in Tunis. The World Bank acts as secretariat for the international donors conference which pledged a total of \$2.4 billion over the next five years, including \$600 million for 1994 for projects in the occupied territories. The pledge was made last October in Washington by 47 donor states but so far no money has been invested and the World Bank is reported to have been seeking clarification about the status of the council within the PLO. Mr. Kaddoumi said the PLO was satisfied with the results of its talks with the World Bank delegation.

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Rabin ready to trade settlements for peace

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said before a renewed Middle East peace shuttle by Washington that he would dismantle Jewish settlements on all occupied Arab territory in return for peace.

"He also said he hoped to sign the stalled accord with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho by mid-May."

Mr. Rabin, who angered settlers on the Golan Heights on Thursday by saying he would uproot them for peace, said his remarks also applied to settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mr. Rabin said he was merely restating long-standing policy but the timing seems certain to please U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher who embarks on his fourth peace mission to Israel and its Arab neighbours on Sunday.

Mr. Christopher, while trying to dampen expectations of a breakthrough, hopes to revive talks with Syria stalled since the Hebron mosque massacre. He also wants to see the delayed Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho carried out.

"If you read interviews with me that were conducted in the past, you will see that I said that for security I would not

evacuate settlements for peace, yes," Mr. Rabin told Israel Radio in remarks broadcast on Friday.

"I replied (on Thursday) to a question in general on the issue of evacuating settlements which a Golan Heights settler happened to ask. My reply reflected by general position with regard to Gaza, Judea and Samaria and the Golan Heights," Mr. Rabin said. Judea and Samaria are the Israeli-given names for the West Bank.

Mr. Rabin's comments further incensed the more than 100,000 settlers who fear they will be part of the price of peace.

"He is prepared to evacuate everywhere," settler spokesman Michael Wassercell said. "(Rabin's) statement is new for those who didn't know him before, this time he didn't lie," he added.

Ever since the massacre of more than 30 Arabs by a settler in Hebron in February and subsequent Arab guerrilla reprisals inside pre-1967 Israel, Mr. Rabin has been signalling that settlers whom he does not regard as serving Israeli interests may have to go.

"Whatever areas that we will decide for peace to vacate, I believe I will not ask the Israeli settlers to stay there," Mr. Rabin told reporters in Tel

Aviv on Friday. "I don't feel that it will be responsible on the part of Israel to tell Israelis 'live there under Arab sovereignty'."

Mr. Rabin met negotiators and cabinet ministers on Friday to review the talks with the PLO in Cairo on self-rule which should have been implemented by April 13.

"There is progress in the negotiations in Cairo, less in Paris about the economic issues and, therefore, I believe that we are moving ahead," Mr. Rabin said in Tel Aviv. "I hope that by mid-May we might reach an agreement... the implementation will take two to three weeks once the agreement will be signed," he said.

Mr. Rabin's remarks about the Golan seem aimed at giving Mr. Christopher an opening in talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad. Washington is eager to revive the Israel-Syria track as soon as the deal with the PLO is completed.

Mr. Rabin stopped short of Syria's demand for a full Israeli withdrawal from the strategic plateau. But Mr. Rabin said peace was of greater value to Israel's security than a group of settlements.

In a rare moment he referred to Syrian soil on the Golan. Bank village on the outskirts of Jerusalem. He had eight knife wounds in the back.



Palestinian women argue with an Israeli soldier as they are prevented from entering an area near Jerusalem (AFP photo)

New arrests after Hamas claims killing

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli troops arrested Hamas' activists in Hebron on Friday, after the group claimed responsibility for killing an Israeli soldier the same day. Palestinian exiles belonging to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) triumphantly returned to the Gaza Strip.

The arrests and returns came as the armed underground groups attached to Hamas and the PLO announced that they had signed a ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip (see separate story).

The families of three senior Hamas members, Aziz Duweik, Hakim Afife and Hissam Jabr told Palestinian reporters that troops arrested all three on Friday morning. There were other unconfirmed reports of arrests.

A security sweep of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on Tuesday put 362 activists in fundamentalist Islamic groups behind bars.

All three men arrested Friday were among 400 Palestinians Israel expelled to Lebanon for one year in Dec. 1992 in response to a wave of attacks.

An anonymous caller to Israel Radio's Arabic service on Friday claimed that Hamas activists stabbed an Israeli soldier to death.

The body of Shachar Simani was found Thursday in a West

Bank village on the outskirts of Jerusalem. He had eight knife wounds in the back.

Previous attacks by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, both opposed to the Israel-PLO autonomy accord, have left 13 Israelis dead and about 80 wounded this month.

A masked member of Hamas also announced the claim through a loudspeaker after Friday prayers outside a mosque in Gaza City.

"Hamas' Izzedin Al Kassam group is responsible for the capture and killing of the soldier," he shouted. Al Kassam is the armed wing of Hamas. "Al Kassam also seized his M-16 gun, his identity card and other documents, then dumped his body."

The killing was a reprisal for Israel's arrest of Hamas members, the masked man said. Nearly 300 Palestinians protested in the city on Friday against Israel's detention of nearly 500 activists in a bid to break up the Hamas network.

Hamas also claimed responsibility for an attack earlier this week in which two Jewish settlers were shot and wounded on the Gaza Strip.

It said the attack was the "first, swift response against continued Israeli arrests of its members."

Hamas suicide bombers blew up two buses on April 6 and 13, killing 12 Israelis.

Fateh, Hamas sign no-violence accord

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Leaders of Yasser Arafat's Fateh movement and the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas hailed a cooperation deal between their armed wings on Friday, but Israel remained silent.

"I consider it an agreement between Fateh and Hamas, not just the armed wings, because the Hawks are not separate from Fateh and Al Qassam is not separate from Hamas," said Ahmad Hilles, a member of Fateh's higher committee on the Gaza Strip.

The Hawks and Izzedin Al Qassam agreed to halt intercommunal violence and to cooperate for the first time in a bid to strengthen Palestinian unity for the start of self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

They also declared a one-month amnesty for collaborators.

Mr. Hilles stressed the agreement was not political. "It is only an agreement concerning daily issues," he said.

Internally there are no major differences over which we need to fight. Security and stability are the most important things for us.

"Why should Israel take measures against this? he asked. "The Israeli government is free to cooperate with any party, so we should have the same freedom."

"This agreement makes it easier for us to sort out our problems. I am sure people will be very happy with this news, such an agreement has been long awaited."

Mahmoud Zahar, a Hamas spokesman, said: "It's a very

positive agreement which will regulate relationships between the two parties."

"I hope this agreement will be followed throughout the territories because with agreements like this the Palestinian people can avoid many of their internal problems."

Amar Suway, a leading Hamas supporter, warned: "This does not mean we will stop our resistance to Israeli occupation."

Israel has voiced strong concern since Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Hamas officials began a dialogue in Gaza more than two weeks ago.

But Israeli officials maintained an uncharacteristically stony silence hours after news of the deal broke. Israel Radio reported more than six hours to report the agreement.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres warned on April 13 that negotiations to implement autonomy would be off if Fateh entered into a deal with Hamas.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid added last Sunday: "The PLO is really fooling itself if it thinks it can divide up the roles and allow Hamas to carry out terrorism against Israel. If the PLO makes an agreement with Hamas there will be no agreement with us."

Fateh officials said the six-point agreement (see page 2) between the military wings of Fateh and Hamas was the first such accord in the Gaza Strip. "After careful examination of the issue of collaborators, the movements of Fateh and

Solution to Aqaba siege unlikely this week despite U.S. pledges

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and the United States are unlikely to resolve their conflict over the U.S.-led naval blockade of Aqaba this week despite assurances by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher that he will present His Majesty King Hussein with "some suggestions" to ease the burden on Jordan of the sanctions against Iraq, sources said Friday.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said any resolution to the dispute will have to be worked out in the Washington-based negotiations of the Jordanian proposal to replace the sea-inspections of Aqaba-bound shipping with onshore inspection by the British company Lloyds Register. But negotiators are unlikely to reach a final agreement by Monday when Mr. Christopher is scheduled to meet with King Hussein in London, the sources said.

Jordan made its proposal in January after rejecting a U.S.

proposal in August to have the international naval forces enforcing the embargo on Iraq conduct their inspection in Aqaba as an encroachment upon its sovereignty.

Sources told the Jordan Times that the United States had accepted the Jordanian proposal in principle but bureaucratic and technical problems have delayed an agreement.

Jordanian officials brushed aside these "pretexts," saying the blockade is part of U.S. pressure on Jordan to coerce it into signing a separate peace treaty with Israel. They said that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was opposing any easing of the blockade on Jordan as its position is still influenced by the Kingdom's stand during the Gulf crisis.

King Hussein in March linked Jordan's return to the Arab-Israeli peace talks to the lifting of the siege on Aqaba.

Sources say the King's strong stand on the issue might have highlighted the importance of the issue to Jordan among U.S. officials who had

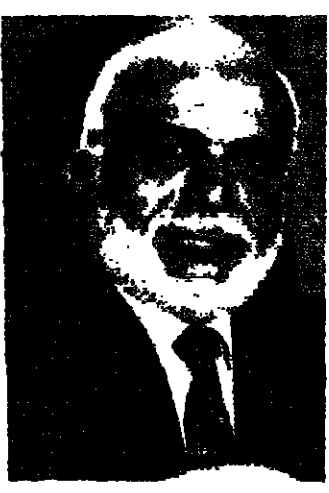
King leaves hospital after minor surgery

LONDON (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein left hospital on Friday after undergoing a successful operation in his left ear.

Upon departure from the hospital, the King was accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Noor and senior officials.

The King's private doctor, Samir Farraj, said Thursday King Hussein underwent a minor surgery and that he was in good condition.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and other senior officials sent congratulatory cables to the King, wishing him speedy recovery and safe return home.



Peres, Arafat end talks with final deal in sight

BUCHAREST (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres ended a series of meetings in Bucharest on Friday with a final agreement on implementing the Palestinian self-rule in sight.

"I think we cleared the air of lots of misunderstandings," Mr. Peres told reporters after the overnight conclusion of their fifth negotiating session since arriving in the Romanian capital on Wednesday.

"On the first day, we found Arafat in a mood as if all his ships had sunk at sea," he said. Mr. Arafat left Bucharest on Friday for Tunis.

Israel's top negotiator at self-rule talks in Cairo said Israeli soldiers would pull out of the Gaza Strip and Jericho within three weeks of signing a final autonomy deal for the areas.

The negotiator, Major-General Amnon Shahak, said

months of lengthy talks would end in agreement soon.

Neither Mr. Arafat or Mr. Peres would commit publicly to a signing date, although both said it was fast approaching.

"We hope we have some concrete results next week," Mr. Arafat said about the Cairo talks which adjourned until Sunday. "And we hope we will have the final agreement."

Mr. Peres said some details sealing a draft peace accord signed in September still needed to be worked out.

Briefing reporters who accompanied him to Bucharest, he said negotiators had yet to set the scope of Palestinian law in the self-rule areas, airspace and sea limits and the composition of a Palestinian administrative council.

But he said: "We are trying to organise so to speak the last chapter of our negotiations."

Mr. Peres declined to rule out the possibility he and Mr. Arafat would meet in Cairo next week if their intervention was needed to wrap up the deal outlined in the Israel-PLO peace accord signed in September.

"If it is necessary, Arafat and I will come to Cairo," Mr. Peres said. "I hope we won't have to."

Mr. Peres said that in effect the negotiations had moved into their final stage — discussion of how to organise "an overlapping period" between the signing of an accord and final handover of Gaza and Jericho to the Palestinians.

He said three subcommittees would go to work in Cairo on arranging the handover of control in Gaza and Jericho.

The first group would deal with security matters, the second with joint Israel-PLO patrols and the third with

(Continued on page 5)

Amnesty demands end to 'systematic Israeli torture'

LONDON (Agencies) — Amnesty International is urging the Israeli government to stop "systematic torture or ill-treatment of detainees" held by the army.

"Thousands of detainees are arrested and held on security grounds every year in Israel and the occupied territories and most are subjected to methods of interrogation amounting to torture or ill-treatment," Amnesty International said in a statement released Friday.

"The Israeli army, the GSS (General Security Service) and the police have all been responsible and medical personnel have apparently cooperated."

The statement was released in advance of Monday's meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, of the U.N. committee against torture, which will be examining the Israeli government's report on its compliance with the U.N. convention barring torture.

Amnesty International said it was particularly concerned by what it described as secret GSS guidelines for interrogation, which allow "a moderate

degree of physical pressure."

"We believe that either the official guidelines for interrogation ultimately endorse torture or ill-treatment, or Israeli officials have extensively violated such guidelines with impunity," the statement said.

Israel denied the charges, but an official said "pressure tactics" were necessary to foil bombing attacks.

"There is no systematic torture of detainees," Uri Dromi, a government spokesman, said in response to the statement, adding that there "were strict rules" to ensure proper treatment of prisoners.

Mr. Dromi contended that sometimes security agents had to resort to tough measures to try to uncover plans for bombing attacks so they could be prevented.

"Amnesty International is particularly disturbed by secret guidelines for interrogation by the General Security Service, which allow the exertion of a moderate measure of physical pressure" as "official policy," the human rights group said. "The Landau Commission of Inquiry, which first drew up such guidelines in October

1987, stressed in its public report that 'the pressure must never reach the level of physical torture or maltreatment of the suspect or grievous harm to his honour which deprives him of his human dignity.' However, it clearly endorsed 'slapping a suspect's face, or threatening him'."

"The risk of torture of detainees in the occupied territories is heightened by the practice of prolonged incommunicado detention. Unlike in Israel where safeguards for detainees are stronger, in the occupied territories adult political detainees accused of serious offenses are normally held without access to a judge for the legal maximum of 18 days. They are denied access to lawyers and relatives for longer periods, usually until the interrogation is over," Amnesty said.

Amnesty International recommended nine measures to the Israeli government for the introduction of safeguards against torture or ill-treatment including: prompt access to judges, lawyers, doctors and

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NATO warns Serbs to halt Gorazde attack or face hits

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) allies on Friday warned the Bosnian Serbs to halt their shelling of the besieged enclave of Gorazde or face immediate air strikes.

NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner said the Serbs must agree immediately to a ceasefire or risk allied air raids. U.S. Ambassador Robert Hunter said the strikes "could occur anytime beginning now."

Mr. Woerner also said the allies also gave the Serbs a 0001 GMT Sunday ultimatum to withdraw their forces three kilometres from the centre of the city of Gorazde and to allow U.N. peacekeepers and medical personnel into the enclave unimpeded.

The city is in the centre of a

325-square kilometre enclave that the United Nations has designated a "safe area."

"The situation demands action," Mr. Woerner told a news conference.

He said if NATO's demands are not met, NATO planes would be authorised to strike at the Serbs' heavy weapons and "other military targets" within a 20-kilometre radius of the centre of Gorazde. Previously, NATO warplanes were limited to attacking heavy weapons known to be firing to protect U.N.

"It's now up to the Bosnian Serbs," Mr. Woerner said. "Nobody should doubt the resolve of this alliance to protect Gorazde."

Diplomats from the 16 NATO nations were continuing their talks on proposals for additional ultimatums to

force the Serbs to withdraw from around other U.N.-designated safe havens before next Wednesday.

A U.N. aid convoy sent to bring relief to Gorazde was trapped by Bosnian Serbs on Friday while trying to retreat, even as shelling of the town itself continued.

U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman Richard Pernod said the convoy, made up of some 100 French, British and Ukrainian peacekeepers, had been ordered to withdraw to Sarajevo because of the situation in Gorazde.

But just as it was poised to do a U-turn, Bosnian Serb officials said that it would not be allowed to return on the path by which it came. Late

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Geagea held and questioned

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Security officials interrogated right-wing Christian leader Samir Geagea and 150 followers Friday in connection with a church bombing and a rival's slaying, while lawyers demanded access to their clients, judicial sources said.

Heavily armed troops increased patrols and checkpoints in Christian east Beirut and the Christian heartland northeast of the capital in possible anticipation of trouble, despite Dr. Geagea's call on partisans to refrain from violence.

Dr. Geagea was grabbed by government troops from his mountaintop headquarters in Ghidras in the Christian heartland late Thursday night and was taken to the Defence Ministry compound in suburban Yarz east of Beirut.

An official statement said he was wanted for questioning about his group's implication in the 1990 massacre of rival

Christian leader Dany Chamoun and his family and in a church bombing Feb. 27 that killed 10 worshippers and injured 60.

"I am innocent on both counts," Dr. Geagea told a few local newspaper reporters who were present when troops picked him up at Ghidras, 35 kilometres northeast of Beirut. "What next? will they accuse me of crucifying Jesus?" (see page 2)

Dr. Geagea was being held in an office room at the Defence Ministry, said judicial sources, who requested anonymity.

Dr. Geagea was expected to remain in custody until at least Monday, when the investigating magistrates will question him.

About 150 Geagea followers taken from Lebanese Forces headquarters after their leader's peaceful arrest remained in detention cells Friday at the Defence Ministry, said the

sources. They, too, were being interrogated.

Attorneys for Dr. Geagea and the other arrested Lebanese Forces members have complained to the Justice Ministry that they were being denied access to their clients under interrogation, said the sources. A decision on the issue was put off until Monday.

About 20 LF members including Dr. Geagea's number two, Fuad Maleki have been arrested in connection with the February 27 church blast that killed 10 people and the 1990 assassination of Chamoun, his wife and two sons.

Chamoun and his family were shot in their apartment soon after Syrian troops toppled rebel Christian General Michel Aoun. Chamoun was an ally of Gen. Aoun during his wars with the Lebanese Forces and the Syrians.

Dr. Geagea has denied that

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Iraqi diplomats return home after standoff in Lebanon

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Three Iraqi diplomats have returned home from Beirut after Lebanon broke diplomatic links with their country over an assassination of an Iraqi dissident in the Lebanese capital.

The three, including Charge d'Affaires Awad Fakhri, flew to Amman aboard a Royal Jordanian (RJ) flight Thursday morning. Two of their colleagues were arrested by Lebanese police as they got out of their diplomatic-plate cars at Beirut airport to board the flight.

The arrest of the two raised to four the number of Iraqi diplomats held in Beirut over the April 12 killing of Sheikh Taleb Ali Al Subei, who was reported to have been a key figure in a foiled plot against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein last year.

Mr. Fakhri had demanded that the Lebanese government, which broke diplomatic ties with Iraq after Baghdad refused to lift the diplomatic immunity for the two attaches, Mohammad Kadhem and Khaled Khalaf release the two diplomats. He also refused to hand over another attaché, Ali Darwish, and guard Hadi Hassan, the suspected assassin, who were held up in the Iraqi embassy in Beirut since the day of assassination.

A Lebanese-Armenian employee of the embassy, George Teredjian, who allegedly drove the assassination team to Subei's apartment in Beirut, has also been detained and charged with complicity.

It was not immediately clear how the embassy stand-off ended, given the tough state-

ments that Mr. Fakhri had been issuing demanding the release of Mr. Kadhem and Mr. Khalaf.

But analysts speculated that the Iraqis realised that they could be in for a long siege by Lebanese police or be exposed to a possible storming of the embassy after Friday, the date set by the Beirut government for them to leave the country and thus the effective end to diplomatic immunity for the building.

They also noted that the Lebanese government had instructed its lone diplomat in Baghdad, Saad Zakhya, to leave Iraq immediately after the arrest of the two Iraqi diplomats in Beirut.

Mr. Zakhya left Baghdad in the early hours of April 13, shortly after the Beirut arrests, and flew out of Amman for the Lebanese capital on April 14.

Mr. Darwish and Mr. Hassan were arrested as they arrived at Beirut airport to board the flight to Amman on Thursday along with Charge d'Affaires Fakhri and two other diplomats, whose names were not immediately available. But one of them was believed to be the Beirut correspondent of the Iraqi News Agency (INA).

Mr. Fakhri and the other two were allowed to board the flight. The Associated Press reported that they were carrying 15 pieces of baggage weighing 350 kilograms, including boxes of files and electronic appliances.

Journalists covering their arrival at Amman airport reported tight Iraqi security that prevented from talking to any of the three, who were met by the Iraqi ambassador in Jordan, Nouri Al Weiss Al Takriti, and other Iraqi diplomats.

A small scuffle broke out as some Iraqi security men sought to seize television films of the arrival of the diplomats from Lebanon, news agencies reported. The row was settled with intervention by Jordanian security forces, who upheld the right of the media to cover the event, the reports said.

The three who arrived from Beirut were directly driven from Amman airport on the 1,000-kilometre trip to Baghdad, the Associated Press quoted Iraqi embassy spokesman Adel Ibrahim as saying.

There was no immediate report from Baghdad of the diplomats' arrival there. The Iraqi government has denied Lebanese Prosecutor-General Munir Owaidat that its intelligence apparatus had ordered the killing of Subei, who held Jordanian and Saudi passports and a known opponent of the Baathist regime in Baghdad.

According to reports in the Lebanese press quoting "confessions" by the two attaches arrested immediately after the killing, the order for the assassination had come from Baghdad over the telex. The operation was allegedly masterminded by Mr. Darwish.

Charge d'Affaires Fakhri was called in by prosecutors to hear the confessions of the two, the reports said.

An Iraqi Foreign Minister spokesman has accused Lebanon of violating the 1961 international convention and regulates diplomatic immunity.

"It has detained diplomats who possess diplomatic immunity... charging them with baseless accusation," the spokesman said in a statement issued on Wednesday.



WELCOME HOME: Palestinian expellee Mahmood Abu Shanab is welcomed home by friends upon his arrival on the Israeli-controlled side of the Rafah border. Mr. Abu Shanab was among five Palestinians who fled abroad to escape the Israeli army to return to the occupied Gaza Strip on Friday from Egypt. They were all members of the Fatah Hawks, the armed wing of Fatah. They returned via the Rafah border

crossing point, after first flying to Egypt from Algeria where they had sought refuge. Ten others returned to the Gaza Strip on Thursday. Eight of them had fled to Algeria and the other two to Libya. The latest group of returnees raised to 70 the number of banned or wanted Palestinians to return to the Gaza Strip and West Bank since the beginning of April (AFP photo)

Students in U.S. urge end to siege

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian students in the U.S. capital have called on the U.S. government to lift the de facto blockade on the port of Aqaba.

"We are greatly concerned that (this issue) be speedily resolved and we emphatically urge each of you to do everything within your power to pursue an end to the Aqaba siege," said a petition addressed to the U.S. government sent and signed "on behalf of all Jordanian students who reside in the U.S."

The petition, addressed to President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Warren Christopher and members of the U.S. Congress, said that the

embargo imposed on Iraq in August 1990 was to ensure Baghdad's compliance with the United Nations' resolutions passed in the wake of Gulf crisis. But, the petition said, the move was "severely affecting" Jordan.

The petition said Jordan was fully cooperative with the U.N. and that not one embargo violation, had been found by inspectors who have searched over 1,700 ships since the imposition of sanctions.

Economic losses resulting from the blockade according to the petition, are causing Jordan severe financial difficulties as major shipping lines have stopped serving Aqaba.

Moreover, Jordan's historical role is being undermined by the siege which is affecting its

position of being a source of security, stability, and development in the region; it added.

Jordan is committed to promoting lasting peace in the Middle East and has always responded enthusiastically to the "window of opportunity for peace," but the embargo on its port is affecting the peace process negatively, the petition said.

Secretary Christopher said Wednesday he was carrying "suggestions" to "ease the burden" on Jordan of the U.S.-led naval blockade. Mr. Christopher is scheduled to start a Middle East tour on Sunday and is expected to meet with His Majesty King Hussein in London Sunday.

Geagea: Will they accuse me of crucifying Jesus?

By Rima Salamah
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — Right-wing Christian leader Samir Geagea was quoted Friday as saying upon his arrest that Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's Syrian-backed government will next accuse him of crucifying Jesus Christ.

Dr. Geagea was grabbed by government troops from his mountaintop headquarters in Ghidras in Lebanon's Christian heartland late Thursday night and was taken to the Defence Ministry compound in suburban Yaze east of Beirut.

An official statement said he was wanted for questioning about his group's implication in the massacre of rival Christian leader Dany Chamoun and his family three years ago, and in a church bombing in February.

"I am innocent on both counts," Dr. Geagea told a few local newspaper reporters who were present when troops picked him up at Ghidras, 35 kilometres northeast of Beirut. "What next? Will they accuse me of crucifying Jesus?"

Dr. Geagea, 42, headed the Lebanese Forces, which fielded the largest Christian militia during the 1975-90 civil war. The group was disbanded after the end of the conflict but continued to operate, like many of its Muslim rivals, as a political party.

But Mr. Hariri's government last month outlawed the Lebanese Forces after eight of its members were accused in the Feb. 27 bombing of the Maronite Catholic Notre

Dame de la Delivrance Church in the port city of Jounieh north of Beirut.

Five Lebanese Forces members are in custody in connection with the church blast, which killed 10 worshippers and wounded 60. Three are at large in Australia and Canada.

Dr. Geagea's arrest was not expected to raise widespread protests in the Christian camp.

"There will be no disturbances. I have ordered all my partisans to refrain from any adverse acts and I am certain they will obey," Dr. Geagea told reporters.

His remarks were published by several Beirut dailies Friday, including the independent Al Nahar, the conservative Al Diyar and the opposition newspaper Nidaa Al Watan.

The leftist Al Safir quoted him as saying the government "wants to muzzle every opposition voice, but I am not going to quit politics and the Lebanese Forces will not vanish."

They said that after Dr. Geagea's peaceful arrest an army officer with a bullhorn ordered all Lebanese Forces partisans at the two-storey headquarters to emerge unarmed, saying "the place is riddled by tanks."

An estimated 150 men came out. They were frisked and then taken to the Defence Ministry by army trucks while troops entered and searched the building, the newspapers said.

Dr. Geagea's wife, Estrida, pleaded with officers not to humiliate the men. One officer

told her Dr. Geagea's followers "will be set free after we take their names and they sign papers," the newspapers added.

Two dozen Lebanese Forces members have been charged with the Oct. 1991 massacre of Chamoun, 56, his half-German wife Ingrid Abdul Noor, and their sons Tarek, 7, and Julien, 5. The only survivors were a maid who managed to hide their infant daughter, Tamara. Half of the suspects have been arrested.

No charges have yet been filed against Dr. Geagea, who was backed by Israel during the Lebanese civil war.

The massacre, only days after the last major battle of civil war, was one of the ugliest crimes of the conflict.

The Lebanese Forces had been at odds with Chamoun because of his support for rebel General Michel Aoun in his 10-month battle for dominance in the Christian heartland.

Hundreds of people were killed before Gen. Aoun was defeated in a Syrian-led onslaught against his hilltop Baabda headquarters east of Beirut on Oct. 13, 1990.

The Syrians are the main power brokers in Lebanon, with 40,000 troops deployed in the country and backing the government's effort to enforce law and order.

Although Gen. Aoun's defeat signalled the end of the civil war, there have been several jolts to government efforts to reestablish law and order.

Mashhad prayer leader wounded

TEHRAN (AFP) — A gunman on Friday shot and wounded the Muslim cleric leading prayers in northeastern Iran's holy city of Mashhad, Iranian state television reported.

It was the first such attack on a prayer leader during a religious service in Iran.

The television said Hojatoleslam Abai-Khorassani was wounded by a man firing a pistol at Imam Reza Mausoleum, one of Shiite Islam's holiest shrines, and taken to a hospital where his condition was reported to be stable.

Security forces overpowered the gunman and arrested him. The motive for the attack was not known.

Hojatoleslam Abai Khorassani, 50, is one of the most influential religious leaders in the Mashhad region.

The attack coincided with the anniversary of the birth of imam Reza, the eighth imam of the Shiite faith.

The Mausoleum was packed with worshippers for Friday prayers.

Mashhad, Iran's second city and home to a large number of Afghan refugees, has been a focus of tension for two years.

Arab boycott of Israel impedes U.S. trade, says Commerce Department

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The Arab economic boycott of Israel "continues to impede U.S. trade and investment," says John Despres, assistant secretary for export enforcement at the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Mr. Despres was commenting on just released Commerce Department statistics on boycott-related requests from Arab countries for the first quarter of 1994, which indicate there has been slow progress in ending the boycott.

In a related development, the Commerce Department imposed civil penalties on five companies for alleged violations of the boycott regulations.

U.S. laws and regulations prohibit U.S. citizens from furnishing information about any person's business relationship with or in a boycotted country — such as Israel. Under these laws, U.S. citizens are required to report promptly any such request.

A Commerce Department quarterly report indicates that Arab countries observing the economic boycott of Israel "continue to ask American firms to take boycott-related actions, many of which are prohibited by U.S. laws and regulations," Mr. Despres said in a statement released April 19.

Statistics for the first quarter of 1994 — Jan. 1 through March 31 — show there were 2,164 such requests reported, 813 of which were prohibited requests. The remaining requests were either permissible, amended or exceptions to the boycott regulations.

While the overall number of requests decreased slightly from the last quarter of 1993, the numbers do not reflect any real pattern of change from previous years, the Commerce Department noted.

Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, during his visit to the Middle East in January, called on the Arab states to lift the boycott. At that time, Mr. Brown received a commitment from the Arab League to consider the rescission of the secondary and tertiary aspects of the boycott against Israel.

(While the primary boycott is directed against the state of Israel, the secondary and tertiary aspects affect those companies that do business with the state of Israel.)

The United States, Mr. Despres said, "will keep doing all it can to persuade the Arab League countries to discontinue their boycott." However, he added, "so far that progress has been disappointingly low."

The Commerce Department will continue its "aggressive enforcement of U.S. anti-boycott law," Mr. Despres

Text of accord between Fateh Hawks and Hamas

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (AFP) — Here is the full text of the agreement reached on the Gaza Strip on Friday between the armed wings of the mainstream Fatah movement and the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas:

"Joint statement from the Fateh Hawks and the Izzeddine Al Qassam factions:

"Our people in beloved Palestine, following some organizational problems between Fateh and Hamas, and while our enemy has been campaigning to fuel strife among our people, the representatives of Fateh and Al Qassam held a historic meeting in which they studied all the organizational, political, social, and economic situation of our people.

"And the factions agreed upon the following with the aim of strengthening Palestinian national unity which will remain a solid rock upon which all enemy plots will die.

"1. The immediate end of all publicity campaigns against one another while respecting freedom of expression, and increased brotherly dialogue between the two to serve our people everywhere.

"2. An end to conflicts and bloody clashes and a final end of the use of violence in solving these conflicts. We stress the importance of the constructive dialogue among our people to put an end to plots aimed at destroying our people by constant crises.

"3. As of the issuing of this statement, there is a ban on the intervention by fugitives or armed men on both sides to solve organizational or family problems.

"The Islamic and national reconciliation committees will perform their duties to solve any conflict, and in case of crisis, the political leaders will intervene to end the problems. Fateh and Hamas will decide the modalities for the implementation of this decision.

"4. Following a lengthy study of our people's economic situation, it has been decided to strike for one day

only in the case of the death of a martyr in his own residential area. In case of his death elsewhere, there will be a day of mourning announced. The intifada activists are advised not to throw stones on cars that circulate in cases of extreme necessity.

"We urge all factions to reduce strikes as much as possible, and in case of emergency, the strike will be announced jointly, through brotherly understanding.

"5. Concerning education, we call on our students to attend school and educational facilities on strike days, and all students must not give into attempts to force them away from school.

"6. Following serious study of the subject of agents, Fateh and Hamas decided to stop killing agents starting from April 22 to May 22, on condition that efforts are united to solve the problem.

"We advise the agents to cut links with the enemy intelligence. God's mercy is better than the enemy's hell, and this month will give them a chance to rethink their situation.

"Oh our people of our stolen country, we are giving you this good news, this brotherly agreement, and we assure you that Palestinian blood cannot be divided or segregated, and Fateh Hawks and Al Qassam will join hands to stop all attempts at dividing the Palestinians.

"We call on the followers of both factions to organize mutual house calls and social meetings to remove all traces of previous conflict, and to follow the Prophet's tradition, which calls on the faithful to be one body.

"God is great and the victory is for our struggling people.

"Signed, Fateh Hawks, the armed wing of the Palestinian national liberation movement, Fateh-Palestine.

"And by, the martyr Izzeddine Al Qassam, the armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas."

Palestine
Date 22/4/94

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Le Monde Sous Marin
18:30 Dossier De La Semaine
19:00 News in French
19:15 Ushuaia
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 Charlie Chaplin
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
21:00 One To One
21:30 The Campbell
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film: "Making The Case For Murder"

PRAYER TIMES

04:30 Fair
05:54 (Sunrise) Dufu
12:34 Dhuhur
16:12 'Asr
19:12 Maghreb
20:53 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifch, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Association Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 623666
Church of the Association Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A relatively cold air front will cross the country, thus ending the khamasini weather conditions. Thus temperature are expected to drop, humidity to rise, clouds to build up and occasional showers to fall with winds becoming westerly to northwesterly active. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy and dusty with a chance of showers, winds southerly active and seas rough.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 20 / 26
Aqaba 24 / 32
Dahab 16 / 28
Queen Valley 21 / 31

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Hisham Kan'an 790286
Dr. Yousef Rashid 896301
Dr. Fayed Dahab 759155
Dr. Abbas Hakim 885446
Firas pharmacy 661912
Pardous pharmacy 778336
Al Aqaba pharmacy 637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636732
Yacoub pharmacy 634945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637460
Najib pharmacy 847832
BRID:
Dr. Ali Omari 272032
Alquds pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Farah Aqarawi 987725
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 192 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 605800
Hotel Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 874667
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 680100
Reprints 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Akil Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 66417/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Munasher Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdali 661646
Italian, Al-Muhajirin 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al-Hilana Modern Hospital (09)990990
BRID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275535
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:30 Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
06:25 New Delhi (RJ)
06:35 Agaba (RJ)
06:45 Dhahran (RJ)
06:55 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
07:05 Beirut (RJ)
07:15 Colombo (RJ)
07:25 Brussels (add) (RJ)
07:35 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
07:45 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
07:55 London, Berlin (RJ)
08:05 Rome (add) (RJ)
08:15 Paris (add) (RJ)
08:25 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
08:35 Brussels (add) (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:20 Vienna (OA)
11:30 Sanaa (TY)
15:45 Rome (AZ)
19:45 Dubai (EM)
20:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)
23:25 Amsterdam (KL)
06:35 Cairo (MS)

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 Beirut (RJ)
08:00 Agaba (RJ)
12:00 Agaba, Paris (add) (RJ)
12:00 Rome (add) (RJ)
12:35 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:35 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
13:45 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:45 Cairo (RJ)
13:55 London (RJ)
14:45 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
21:00 Laranea (RJ)
21:05 Bahrain, Dubai (RJ)
21:15 Jeddah (RJ)
21:45 Damascus (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:30 Beirut (RJ)
06:15 Beirut (ME)
12:30 Sanaa (TY)
13:50 Vienna (OA)
20:45 Dubai (EM)
23:55 Damascus, Paris (AF)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 550 / 650
Banana (Mukannam) 620
Cabbage 120 / 100
Carrot 250 / 150
Cauliflower 150 / 150
Cucumbers (large) 150 / 150
Cucumbers (small) 300 / 200
Eggplant 200 / 100
Garlic 350 / 250
Green beans 150 / 150
Lemon 140 / 80
Marrow (large) 150 / 150
Marrow (small) 320 / 240
Mushrooms 400 / 300
Onion (dry) 200 / 120
Onion (green) 280 / 250
Peas 300 / 200
Pepper (hot) 380 / 240
Pepper (sweet) 380 / 240
Potato 380 / 240
Tomato 420 / 220
String beans 460 / 280

هنا من لاجل

'Statement lauds King's efforts to safeguard the Holy City as a symbol of peace'

House 'fully supports' King's stand on peace process

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament has voiced absolute support for His Majesty King Hussein's firm stand in the face of Israel's threats addressed to the Kingdom.

The House, in a statement issued here Thursday, also expressed deep appreciation of the King's relentless endeavours to safeguard the holy places and to restore the Dome of Rock and the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

The statement ran as follows: "The Lower House of Parliament studied political developments in the region and the Israeli threats to Jordan as well as the continued American blockade on the port of Aqaba."

"The House considers King Hussein's address marking the end of restoration work at the Dome of the Rock and Aqsa Mosque as containing a reaffirmation of the Jordanian national stands vis-a-vis the Palestine question and the peace process as well as pan-

Arab causes in general. "The House voices its full backing to the Jordanian stand with regard to the concept of a just peace in the region, which is based on the restoration of Arab sovereignty over the Holy City."

"In line with the requirements of the international legitimacy and human rights principles, the House reiterates its rejection of and strongest outrage over Israeli and Western threats to Jordan, accused of backing terrorism, and it places the blame on the Israeli government for obstructing peace and for procrastination in implementing U.N. Security Council resolutions and for trying to avoid compliance with the world community's rules with backing from the United States benefiting from the weak Arab stand and lack of coordination among Arab countries."

"The House expresses full support for the Arab Palestinian people in their struggle and steadfastness and defence of their legitimate rights and

lands and reconfirms full backing for the Palestinians' struggle which is guaranteed by all international laws and the Geneva conventions, as well as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights."

"The House also highly values King Hussein's support for the restoration of the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and lauds the King's efforts to safeguard the Holy City as a symbol of peace."

"The House expresses its full condemnation of the U.S. aggression on the Arab Nation and its continued blockade against the port of Aqaba which aims at pressuring Jordan to abandon its pan-Arab and national stand and conclude a separate peace treaty with Israel to serve Israeli and American objectives of controlling the Middle East region and its natural wealth."

"The House also expresses condemnation of continued American sanctions on Iraq and deprivation of the Iraqi people of their requirements of food and medicine."



GRACE IN MOVEMENT: Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Mother Zein Al Sharrar, Al Jeel Al Jadeed Club's Junior dance troupe will hold its annual Circassian dance festival at the Baccalaureate School auditorium on April 27, 28 and 29 at 8:30 p.m. The troupe was established in 1966 as a separate group from the main dance troupe and is made up of 70 boys and girls aged five to 14. The troupe's activities aim at popularising and developing the Circassian dance as an art form and at impressing traditional values on the minds of the young while, at the same time, conveying "a message of hope that the legacy of the past can be propagated to the generations to come."

Investors complain of slow pace in link-up project with Mayo Clinic

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Investors in the link-up project between the Amman Diagnostic Centre and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester are complaining about the slow pace of the project's development. "Such a project needs business-minded people to carry it out, and not just doctors," an investor in the venture told the Jordan Times Friday.

An agreement was signed on Feb. 18 by Jihad Barghouti, chairman of the Amman Diagnostic Centre, and Mayo Clinic Director Rick Colvin. The link-up arrangement aims at enabling patients in Jordan to have access to the expertise of the Mayo Clinic, in the U.S., in diagnoses and treatment without having to travel to the reputed medical facility in Rochester, Minnesota.

The Amman Diagnostic Centre has raised a capital of JD 12 million to fund the

project. Thirty two investors, mainly doctors and business people are involved in the funding of the arrangement.

Several contributors, however, are dissatisfied with the venture's progress, which they described as lacking consistency. Ibrahim Abul Ragheb, a major investor in the project, said that the founding committee of the project is marginalising the role of investors in the development stages of the venture. Mr. Abul Ragheb added that the committee only summons contributors to sign papers concerning steps to implement the agreement without discussing them with investors before hand. Mr. Abul Ragheb added that the "doctors' technique" in handling projects is different from that of businessmen's, but that both medical and business aspects of the agreement should overlap to speed up the project.

Meanwhile, an exchange of expertise between the Mayo Clinic and Amman's Diagnostic Centre is currently

in progress, and local specialists are undergoing training in cooperation with the Rochester clinic.

The agreement between the Mayo Clinic and the centre provides for an annual fee to be paid to the U.S. facility for the services in addition to the other charges on a case-by-case basis, including regular visits by its experts to Amman.

The Mayo Clinic is considered as one of the best medical facilities, with a high international reputation. Many heads of state and statesmen have had treatment there.

His Majesty King Hussein has visited the facility twice since he underwent successful cancer surgery in the Rochester clinic in August 1992.

Investors in the sophisticated programme are eager to witness progress in the venture. They say that for the projects to be in effect soon, more effort and cooperation between parties concerned in the programme are needed.

Kingdom to host museum conference

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Preparations are under way by the Department of Antiquities, in cooperation with the International Council of Museums (ICOM), to open a four-day conference entitled "Encounter of museums professionals of Arab countries: museums, civilisation and development," to be held Tuesday in Amman.

Department of Antiquities Director General Safwan Al Tell told the Jordan Times that the meeting, which will be held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, would be dedicated to discussing the role of museums in promoting culture.

The meeting, which is to take place at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC), will also deal with museums management, legislations related to museum and other pertinent topics, said Dr. Tell.

The meeting, organised in implementation of directives by the Crown Prince, is designed to underline the importance of artefacts, antiquities and museums in shedding light on the legacy and various cultures left by the mankind, said Dr. Tell.

The organisers said more than 80 museum professionals from 20 Arab and Arabic-speaking countries will attend the meeting. The ICOM said in a statement that the objective of this encounter is to invite professionals of the same region to share their experiences and to engage in a debate on the future of the museums and also to develop new policies for exchange and cooperation on regional and international levels.

According to the statement, the conference will break up into workshops which, it said, would discuss the role of museums and museum staff, management of collections and research, ethics and legislation.

Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Adwan Thursday met with Mrs. Elizabeth Desportes, ICOM secretary-general, and the accompanying delegation, thanking them for choosing Jordan as a venue for this important conference.

Mrs. Desportes outlined the

aims of the conference and the topics to be tackled by the specialists attending it from Arab and foreign countries. Among the attendants will be the president of Mali, along with delegates from ICOM, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and representatives of museums from Jordan and Arab states.

French medical industry gets high exposure in Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A wide spectrum of French technology in medicine and hospital equipment goes on show today, Saturday, in Amman in the latest French bid to establish links with the Jordanian market.

Eighteen companies, most of them from south of France, are putting their wares on display at the four-day "French Medical Technology Presentation." The event is part of a seminar during which experts will also familiarise Jordanian doctors and pharmaceutical businessmen with what France has to offer in advanced equipment and techniques in the area of medicine and health, according to Michel Duger, head of the Amman office of the French Department for External Economic Relations.

The event is organised by a private sector company, S.A.M. International Trade, based in Montpellier, which held two exhibitions in Jordan last year.

Nadira Manchot, director of the company, said she was encouraged to arrange this week's event by two reasons: there is a large scope for cooperation between Jordanian and French firms in terms of marketing within the Kingdom, and Jordanian companies can also offer opportunities for French businesses in the occupied territories.

"We are looking at Jordan not only as a market on its own but also as a bridge to the Arab World, the West Bank and Gaza in particular," Ms. Manchot told a press conference on Thursday.

Both Ms. Manchot and Mr. Duger noted that many Jordanian companies are branching out to the occupied territories encouraged by the developments in the Arab-

Israeli peace process.

"It is much easier for us to get into the West Bank through Jordan," said Ms. Manchot, adding that the participants in the exhibition were looking for agency arrangements in Jordan and also for possible technology transfer to Jordanian industries.

"We made a thorough study of the market situation and possibilities in Jordan, and we are highly confident that there is a large scope for cooperation between French and Jordanian companies," said Ms. Manchot, who is of Arab origin.

Ms. Manchot was the organiser for the French exhibitions in Jordan last year. The first was a general presentation of what French exporters could offer, while the second one was dedicated to water and water technology.

Companies taking part in this week's event at the Philadelphia Hotel will include manufacturers of hospital supplies, surgical and measuring instruments, artificial limbs, laboratory utensils, dental bridges, air-conditioning for surgical and hospital environments, medical sports equipment, morgue fridges, and body-care machines.

The event will be formally opened by Ibrahim Zein, head of the Jordan Businessmen's Association (JBA), in what Mr. Duger described as an emphasis on the importance of the private sector in developing relations.

Invitations have gone out to more than 2,000 Jordanian doctors, pharmacists and businessmen in the field of medicine and medical equipment. Mr. Duger said, adding that his office's role in the event was mainly in offering logistical support.

"It is a private sector initiative," he said. "We are here to extend whatever support we can to making it a success."

"France has made major advances in the field of medicine and medical equipment to a level equal to that of the United States and others," he said. "What we need is exposure and promotion, and that is what this week's exhibition and seminar intend to achieve."

Total French exports to Jordan were worth around JD100 million during 1993. About eight to nine per cent of the exports were of raw material and ingredients for the pharmaceutical industry, medical equipment and medicines, Mr. Duger said. Jordan's exports to France during the year were about 10 per cent of the total French exports to the Kingdom, he said.

"France-Jordanian cooperation in the medical sector goes back many years," he said, noting that the King Hussein Medical Centre, Jordan's most prestigious medical facility, was built by a French firm.

Mr. Duger said he expected French exports to go up to JD150 million during 1994.

The major contracts signed by French companies with Jordanian firms towards the end of 1993 and beginning of 1994 include a \$120 million turnkey project for the Indo-Jordanian Chemical Company, a \$40 million project involving gas turbines to the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), a \$20 million project with the Telecommunications Corporation, and a \$10 million export order for 100 Renault trucks to the Iraqi-Jordanian Land Transport Company, Mr. Duger said.

The diplomat noted that a JBA team of up to 80 people was scheduled to pay a visit to France early next month and one of the key events of the visit was a May 5 meeting with French manufacturers and exporters under the auspices of the Franco-Arab Chamber of Commerce.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

BALLET

★ Ballet performance (Swan Lake, Bolero, Romeo and Juliet) at the main theatre of the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

DIALOGUE

★ Dialogue with Dr. Hanan Ashrawi at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of women's home-made products (including ceramics, sweets and handicrafts) at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of paintings by artist Bahijeh Al Hakim at Alia Art Gallery (Tel. 639303).

★ "Spring Exhibition" of Jordanian industrial products at the World Exhibition Centre, University Road (11:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.) (Tel. 847113).

★ American Promotion Week '94 at the Amman International Motor Show, Airport Highway (12:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.) (Tel. 714211).

★ Exhibition by artist Mustafa Al Hallaj at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens St. (Tel. 687598).

★ Exhibition by artists Alia Ammoura, Dorothy Mango, Hind Naser, Janine Saaf, Lucy Marto, Tete Wegelius at Ab'ad Art Gallery (10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.) (Tel. 819861).

★ Engraving exhibition by artist Jean-Pierre Pincemin at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at the Italian Language Centre (9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 669348).

★ Jordanian-Iraqi contemporary exhibition by over 80 artists at Ain Art Gallery in Wadi Saqra (9:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 644451).

★ "Permanent" exhibition of 56 Arab contemporary artists at Darat Al Funn of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh (Tel. 643251/2).

Workshop to tackle women's participation in public life

AMMAN (J.T.) — A regional workshop entitled "Promoting women's participation in public life" is to open at the Dead Sea Saturday with the participation of at least 20 leaders of Arab women's non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The goal of the meeting, organised by America Mideast Educational and Training Services (Amideast) office in Amman, is the promotion of women's participation in public life in general and in Jordan in particular.

An Amideast statement said that the April 23-25 meeting will be attended by leaders from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Lebanon, Tunisia, Yemen and guests from government offices in Jordan, as well as diplomatic media and NGOs.

Established in 1951, Amideast has its headquarters in Washington D.C. Amideast has a network of offices located in Jordan, as well as Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, the West Bank, Gaza and Yemen.

MOURNING

Ziyad R. Annab

mourns the passing away of his wife
Verna Jean Scott

The mother of Tariq Annab, Nadia Fauri and Najwa Annab

on Friday April 22, 1993

Condolences will be received at family home: morning for women, afternoon for men

Under the Patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Abdallah Bin Al Hussein

AMMAN INTERNATIONAL MOTOR SHOW

Presents

AMERICAN PROMOTION WEEK 94

FROM 20th - 25th / APRIL 1994
DAILY FROM 12:00 A.M. TO 10:00 P.M.

Organised by: **AMMAN INTERNATIONAL MOTOR SHOW**
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS LAND

Tel: 714211 Fax: 715311

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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Jordan Times advertising department.

Crisis exposes pact

THE CRISIS between Iraq and Lebanon over the alleged role of Iraqi "diplomats" in Beirut in the assassination of a prominent Iraqi opposition leader last week has ended up in severing of diplomatic relations between the two Arab countries.

This development does not augur well for inter-Arab relations, especially at a time when the Arab national interests call for reconciliation rather than added estrangement. Both Beirut and Baghdad are in the process of nursing the wounds of long wars, and can ill afford added conflict. The Iraqi government has lately been busy trying to mend relations with the international community after having implemented, to a great extent, the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions that place it under punitive sanctions. Lebanon, on the other hand, has been struggling to maintain a shaky security situation.

The crisis between the two countries calls into question the validity and the effectiveness of the 1961 Vienna Convention on diplomatic privileges and immunities. The rationale behind according diplomats certain categories of privileges and immunities is to facilitate their diplomatic functions without fear of arrest or harassment. In retrospect, the treaty on diplomatic missions has been repeatedly abused and exploited by many countries including those who belong to the developed world. The continuation of the violations of the spirit and the letter of the convention calls for a reappraisal of its provisions in order to make sure that only its original purpose should be protected and promoted. The central issue here is whether a certain act is peculiar to the conduct of any given diplomatic duty. Many countries, for example, have moved effectively against diplomats committing misdemeanours as minor as illegal parking because it was established that violating traffic rules is not basic to the fulfillment of a diplomatic duty, not to mention that it may lead to hazards to life. The review of the Vienna Convention on diplomats is overdue especially since it seems to serve as some kind of licence to commit crime with impunity. Many governments appear not to know where to draw the line between legitimate and illegitimate diplomatic functions.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily criticised an official Saudi Arabian spokesman for giving a statement claiming that a solution could be worked out for ending the blockade on Aqaba. Doubtless, the statement came amidst renewed American attempts to breathe some life into the stalled Middle East peace process that has almost collapsed due to Israel's procrastinations, said the paper. But, said the paper, we would like to remind the U.S. Secretary of State, who is preparing for his tour of the Middle East in the coming week, that mere words by the U.S. administration can convince no one. It said that suspicions shroud the real intentions of the U.S. administration which over the past years displayed total bias towards Israel, and has failed to live up to its claim that it was playing the role of active partner in the peace-making process. Mr. Christopher, said the paper, should take His Majesty King Hussein's recent declaration about linking Jordan's involvement in the peace process to the lifting of the blockade seriously and should realise that Jordan has a pivotal role to play in the peace.

JORDANIAN PERSPECTIVE

'Right is might'

U.S. SECRETARY of State Warren Christopher's characterisation of American-Jordanian relations as excellent and his affirmation that Washington has seriously moved towards proposals to address the Kingdom's demand for an end to the siege on Aqaba have served more than one purpose.

By acknowledging that the U.S. has "some problems" with respect to the blockade of Jordan's only seaport and that he would be carrying "some suggestions for easing that problem," Mr. Christopher was clearly signalling that there could be some common ground. And, as diplomats explain, the common ground involves replacing the sea-based inspections of Jordan-bound cargo by American-led naval forces with a neutral international agency like Lloyds Register. The mechanisms and modalities of cargo inspections at the port of Aqaba have already been worked out and all it needs is a formal agreement, the diplomats say. We hope they are right, and an arrangement would be in place soon at Aqaba without compromising Jordan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We would have hoped that the issue was resolved much earlier, and Jordan and Jordanians would have been spared the hundreds of millions of dollars that they incurred as losses resulting from the damaging overzealous interceptions of all vessels entering the Tiran Straits.

Once a satisfactory arrangement is in place at Aqaba, the way ahead is clear for meaningful progress in the peace process as long as Washington does not seek to put the cart before the horse by pressing Jordan into making "dramatic gestures" such as signing an accord with Israel before negotiating the terms of that accord.

Mr. Christopher appeared to have shed some light on Washington's approach to the issue when he referred to His Majesty King Hussein's stand that "the final signature should be the crowning achievement, rather than prematurely or in advance, and we can only respect that point of view."

Washington, it is hoped, would live up to what Mr. Christopher said and would step down from the point of pressure that it had been applying against Jordan.

For many of us, the siege of Aqaba was also an indication of the overall deterioration in Jordanian-American relations. For no fault of our own, Jordan was either being taken for granted or targeted for pressure since the early 1980s when it refused to join the Camp David process.

The strain in relations in the wake of the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait owed its origins to an overall perception in Washington that Jordan was joining the hardline camp; but hardline camp it is indeed if the definition includes a stand against surrender of Arab and Palestinian rights in Palestine and demand for a just, fair and comprehensive Middle East settlement enshrining the rights of all people concerned based on international legitimacy, and we could not do much to correct people's perceptions, least of all that of the U.S., without compromising the principles that we have always adhered to.

Mr. Christopher's latest comments affirmed that the strain in ties is a thing of the past and Amman-Washington relations have survived the crisis. That affirmation came to pull the rug from under the feet of the defeatists who have been arguing that Washington had "written off" Jordan and the Kingdom's key role in the region. We hope there would be concrete action soon to practically support the secretary's affirmations.

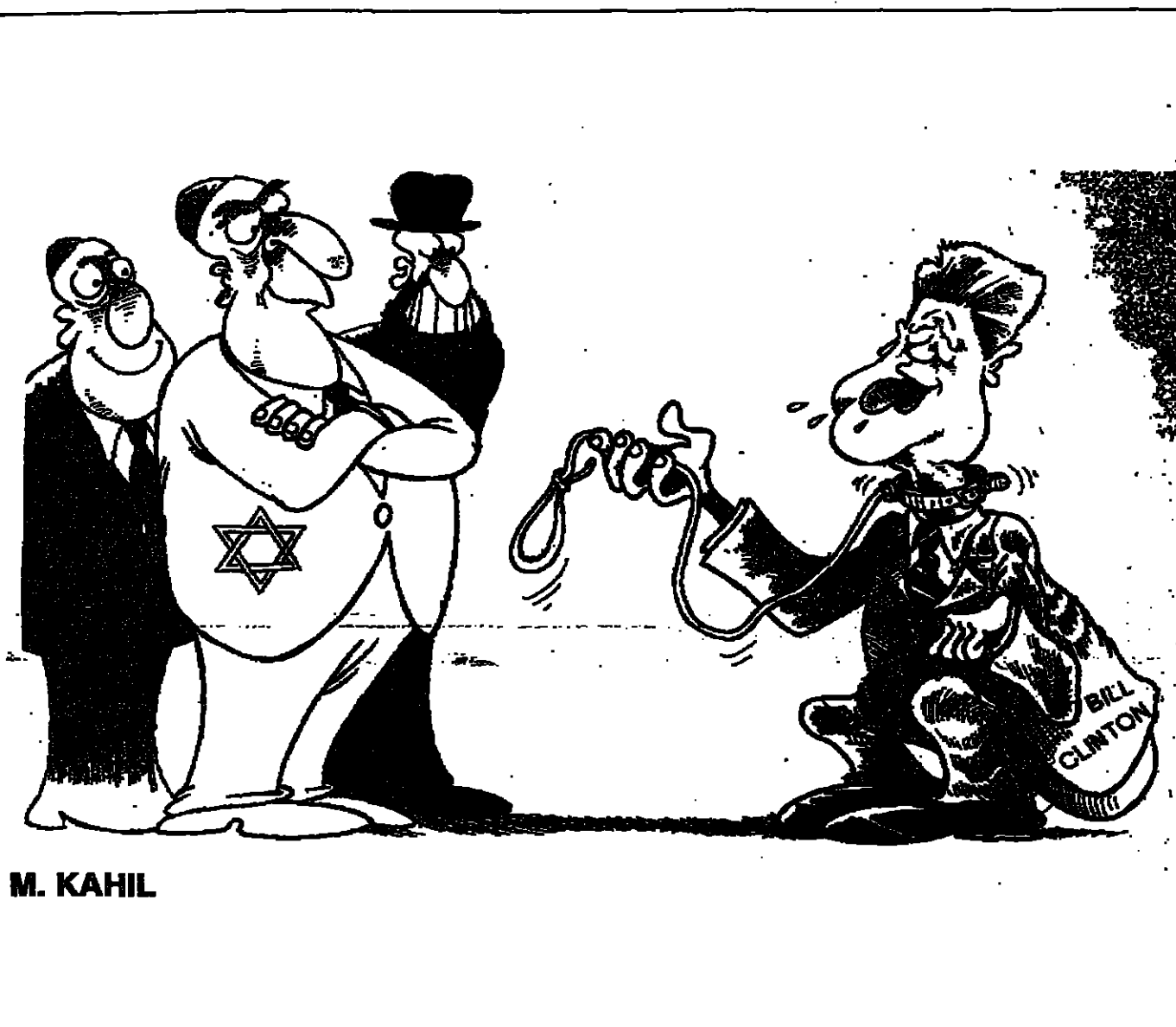
Mr. Christopher was not telling the world anything new when he said Jordan was opposed to extremism and terrorism of any kind or form. Our record speaks for itself. If anything, we have been on the receiving end of terrorism and extremism and have paid dearly for it over the years in terms of our people's lives. Mr. Christopher was speaking for us all when he said "Jordan certainly does not want to be hospitable to the terrorists or do anything... to have anything on its territory which promotes terrorism or extremism..."

Notwithstanding the summarisation, the fact remains that there indeed is a clear distinction between American and Arab perceptions of terrorism and extremism. We hope this difference in viewpoints would be laid to rest once and for all when the peace process achieves its objectives and security and stability are restored to the Middle East, with people of the region enjoying the fruits of peace in terms of a better life and living conditions.

A simplified approach would be that no one is born a terrorist, and when people have something in life which they stand to lose, they will balk at undertaking actions that threaten what they cherish for themselves and their families. We are very much heartened by what Secretary Christopher had to say and we cannot but hope that he meant every word he said, particularly the concern he expressed over the "need to have the peace be comprehensive and to make progress on each of the tracks."

In all good faith, for us here a comprehensive peace means the return of all the Arab territories, including Arab East, Jerusalem, that Israel occupied in the 1967 Middle East war, Israeli recognition of the Palestinian people's political and territorial rights (by not threatening any future Palestinian entity), Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli agreements, again based on Israeli pullout from the Golan and south Lebanon, and indeed Jordanian-Israeli accord based on a return of occupied Jordanian territory, practical respect for the Kingdom's legitimate share of water and Amman's demand for compensation for the high price it paid for hosting Palestinian refugees on its soil.

If the U.S. perception of peace in the Middle East varies from what we behold as the sacred principles for Arab-Israeli coexistence, then it is going to be a laborious process. For we know that sooner or later the might of the right will win over the right of the might.



M. KAHIL

Serb offensive on Gorazde undermines Russian diplomacy

By Sergei Shargorodsky
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — The Serb offensive in the Muslim enclave of Gorazde is a big embarrassment for Russia, which claims to have a special influence on the Serbs in former Yugoslavia and wants to be regarded a major player in the region.

The assault, which came in spite of promises by Bosnian Serb leaders and Moscow's diplomatic initiatives, undermines a carefully constructed foreign policy line that Russia has successfully pursued in recent months.

Testifying to Russia's exasperation, its envoy for the former Yugoslavia, Vitaly Churkin, left for home Monday, predicting a "huge catastrophe" and "immense bloodshed" if the Serbs seize Gorazde.

In Moscow, the raging Churkin said the Serbs showed no real willingness to negotiate and only played for time.

"It's about time for Russia to stop all negotiations with the Bosnian Serbs. The time for talking is over," Mr. Churkin said. "The Bosnian Serbs must understand that by dealing with Russia, they are dealing with a great power and not a banana republic."

"Moscow must decide if it can allow a group of extremists to use the politics of great Russia for achieving its own goals," Mr. Churkin said in

comments carried by the Interfax news agency. "Our answer is clear — never."

A day before, Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, asked by the United States to use Russia's reputed influence, returned from a hasty trip to the former Yugoslavia with Serb pledges there would be no attack on Gorazde.

Bosnian Serbs bombarded the Muslim enclave with artillery shells on Monday, leaving thousands of refugees cowering in the streets for lack of shelter. The U.N.

against the former Yugoslavia.

Russia has counted on its historic and religious ties with the Serbs, who are fellow Slavs and Orthodox Christians. Recently, Moscow has persuaded them to withdraw heavy weapons from around Sarajevo and won a promise to reopen an airport at Tuzla.

Reopened success in former Yugoslavia is crucial for President Boris Yeltsin's government, which has been trying to adopt a more decisive foreign policy line in response to hardline and nationalist criticism.

These increasingly influential critics, who scored major victories in December's parliament elections, accuse the government of being subservient to the West and demand that Russia reassert itself as a world power.

The hardliners have long capitalised on the Serbs as victims of hostile U.S. and NATO expansionism assaulting the boundaries of the "Slav world."

sent volunteers to fight alongside the Serbs and the Serb banner also was raised by ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

The Serbs were a convenient cause for the government to demonstrate its new assertiveness and distance itself from the West. In that context, last week's NATO air strikes against the Serbs earned unanimous condemnation in Russia.

The government, feeling that its status on the world arena was at stake, complained about not being consulted in advance and said the unilateral NATO action only undermined its peace efforts.

Now, it is the Serbs who are undermining these efforts. "When the Serbs were saying that the whole world was against them and they needed help, we agreed, provided that they follow our instructions," said Mr. Churkin. "Instead, they are using the Russian policies as a cover."

Mr. Kozyrev was in no hurry to admit Russia's diplomatic defeat. Instead, he blamed the Muslim side for provocations and NATO for aggravating the situation by its air strikes, and argued that Moscow remained perhaps the only possible mediator.

"I think that Russia remains the only strong player on this scene which has not stained itself with irresponsible actions," he said.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Israel's threats to Jordan reflect its impotence in the occupied territories

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

ISRAEL'S THREATS to Jordan, the U.S. Secretary of State's statements on the eve of his tour of the Middle East, the stalled peace process and a host of domestic issues were given prominent coverage by the local Arabic press in the past week.

Writing in Al Ra'i daily, columnist Fahd Al Fanek said resisting occupation is the right of all peoples, and that such is the right that the Palestinians are exercising. By trying to shift the blame for the resistance activities inside the occupied Arab territories to Jordan, said the writer, Israel is trying to escape implementing U.N. resolutions. Hamas, which claimed responsibility for the bomb blasts and warned of three more coming up, operates from inside the occupied territories; its actions are purely Palestinian actions that have nothing to do with Jordan, said the writer.

Israel has resorted to falsehoods to justify its own impotence in dealing with the upsurge of violence and has accused Jordan of being behind the bomb blasts carried out by the Palestinian resistance, said Al Dastour daily. The Israeli threats against Jordan, the paper said, are part of a concerted campaign directed against the Kingdom. But this campaign would never shake the Jordanian people's confidence in their leadership nor would they stop the resistance from pursuing the struggle for freedom.

Writing in Al Dastour, columnist Taher Al Adwan said that Jordan owns a worldwide credibility and is known to be adopting moderate policies and never condoning terrorism. The Prime Minister of Israel, in his drive to stick the blame on Jordan for resistance activities inside the occupied territories, has resorted to false reports claiming that Jordan television had aired an interview with Hamas elements, said the writer. The false claims and the fact that Hamas is operating from inside the occupied lands have rendered the Israeli allegations totally false, he said. Yitzhak Rabin's threats to Jordan, backed by claims and allegations that Jordan harbours terrorism, clearly manifest the Israeli government's total failure to deal with the questions at hand, according to the columnist in Al Ra'i daily.

Tareq Masarweh said those Israeli threats do not frighten Jordan but, if anything, expose Israel's impotence and its inability to deal with the resistance which is on the upsurge. Al Dastour daily welcomed statements by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who reportedly said his country maintains strong ties with Jordan. But the paper said that the Jordanians had wished to hear and to see practical steps towards ending the U.S.-led blockade on Aqaba to ensure the strength of these ties. There is a big difference between words and deeds said the paper; adding that double-standard policies never win any credibility.

The same view was echoed by Al Ra'i daily which said that if Washington is serious about ending the Middle East conflict and bolstering ties with Jordan, it should back its words with deeds. However the facts on the ground speak otherwise, because the United States has maintained a blockade on Aqaba and continues to enforce Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian land through providing the Jewish state with the means to achieve that goal, said the paper.

Commenting on the prospects of peace in the region, Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, said that Israel's continued refusal to implement U.N. resolutions and to grant the Palestinians their legitimate rights continue to block any move towards peace. Referring to the Palestinian-Israeli talks, the writer said that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is doing all it can to end Israel's occupation, and has recognised Israel, and accepted a transitional autonomy rule in Palestine. But, he said, Israel continues to stall and put obstacles to any agreement.

As long as Mr. Rabin refuses to commit himself and his government to the implementation of U.N. agreements and the Oslo deal, the occupied lands are bound to witness further resistance and violence activities from which the Israelis have no escape, said Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dastour. The writer said that Mr. Rabin and his government are, instead of withdrawing forces from Arab lands in implementation of the Oslo deal, are escalating all forms of repression in the occupied lands. He said repression is bound to breed counter violence that would cause more sufferings on both sides.

The sales tax was the theme of an article by Taher Adwan, a columnist in Al Dastour who said that the only arena for discussing such question is Parliament. The writer said that it is unacceptable to see the government resorting to the state television to peddle this tax, and the Jordanian public wishes to see a real and constructive dialogue in Parliament before any final decision on that tax is made.

The first incident in which more than 20,000 people gathered in the Jordanian capital Amman to protest against the government's decision to raise the sales tax, was between the fifth and sixth of April. The protest was led by the Amman branch of the PLO and the Jordanian Communist Party.

The protest was the first in a series of demonstrations against the government's decision to raise the sales tax. The protesters demanded the government to withdraw the tax and to hold free elections.

Solution to siege unlikely this week

(Continued from page 1)

on the Kingdom despite its adherence to the sanctions against Iraq.

Officials point to the non-existence of inspection operations against neighbouring countries which have trade links with Iraq as proof that the Aqaba blockade is intended to pressure Jordan.

"The fact that we are singled out and nobody is interested in finding out what trade with Iraq goes out from Turkey, Syria and Iran is an undeniable proof that the purpose is to pressure Jordan," Jordanian official said.

Jordanian officials said the U.S. has also been exerting pressure on Jordan by demanding that the Kingdom take action against companies which it alleges are acting as a front for Iraq.

The officials said the U.S. had been using "non-paper diplomacy" with Jordan by providing it with lists of companies

that it claims are working for Iraq and demanding action against them.

But after investigating these companies, officials said, the government found nothing illegal about their operations and informed the United States that the Kingdom cannot take any action against them because they are violating neither Jordanian laws nor the sanctions regime against Iraq.

One official said the U.S. has linked a solution to the Aqaba siege to a crack down on these companies whose number could not be determined.

"The U.S. is applying double pressure on Jordan. It is applying gunboat diplomacy and non-paper diplomacy," said prominent Parliament Member Abdul Karim Al Kabari.

But the U.S. embassy in Amman denied that there is any link between the two situations.

"The (U.S.) embassy denies the link between the alleged list of Iraqi companies and the discussions between Jordan and the United States to alleviate the economic burden" on Jordan from the inspection operations in Aqaba, said an embassy official.

Sources said that some U.S. agencies were not satisfied with the mechanism through which Jordan investigated the operations of the alleged front companies for Iraq. They added that some U.S. departments involved in the negotiations over the inspection operations want to see Jordan take action against these companies as a proof of the "reliability" in enforcing the sanctions against Iraq.

But Jordanian officials rejected these explanations, insisting that like the siege on Aqaba, demands for action against these companies are part of the pressure the U.S. has been applying on Jordan to achieve political goals.

Arafat, Peres end Bucharest talks

(Continued from page 1)

administering civilian services, Mr. Peres said.

"We are all interested in shortening as much as possible the period of overlap — turning the twilight situation into a clear one," he said.

At a news conference, during an international business forum attended by both men on Thursday, Mr. Arafat said he was certain Israeli soldiers would quit Gaza and Jericho within days of the signing of a final agreement.

Israeli troops were scheduled to begin their pullout from Gaza and Jericho in December and end the withdrawal by April 13.

"For how long can we say... tomorrow, or after tomorrow or next month — or no sure dates," Mr. Arafat complained at the news conference referring to the delays.

An Israeli minister said Israel and the PLO could sign an agreement in the first week of May.

"Signing an agreement in the first week of May seems a very reasonable possibility to me," Environment Minister Yossi Sarid told Israel Radio.

Mr. Sarid's comments came after he attended high-level consultations on the peace negotiations called by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

PLO chief negotiator Nabil Shaath said Thursday that Mr. Arafat and Mr. Rabin should meet in Cairo between May 2 and May 4 to sign an autonomy accord.

The negotiating teams had agreed to announce the date for signing the accord on Monday, Dr. Shaath said.

Amnesty demands end to Israeli torture

(Continued from page 1)

relatives; the promotion of any form of "physical pressure" or other coercion; the effective investigation of allegations of torture; and the full implementation of the Convention against Torture.

"While the peace process between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) develops, the human rights situation in Israel and the occupied territories should remain under close security," said Amnesty International.

NATO warns Bosnian Serbs

(Continued from page 1)

Friday the convoy was still therefore trapped at the entrance to the town of Rogatica, 35 kilometres east of Sarajevo, he said.

Mr. Pernod said it had been ordered back to Sarajevo by General Guillaume de Lapresle, UNPROFOR commander for ex-Yugoslavia, because "due to the situation in Gorazde, the detachment did not have the means to fulfil its mission."

The convoy left Sarajevo Thursday, after being delayed for several days. It was blocked at Rogatica Thursday afternoon by Bosnian Serb women protesting about the treatment of their husbands at the hands of Muslims in Gorazde.

Meanwhile, Serb forces continued their onslaught on Gorazde, a day after what a U.N. spokesman described as "the bloodiest day" in the campaign to date.

Kris Janowski, an official of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said three people had been killed and three wounded when Serb shells slammed into a building used by U.N. military observers, while another person was killed by a sniper.

The hospital had received many hits, and the area was covered in smoke, he said. UNHCR officials had lost contact with the hospital.

In Brussels, the NATO nations considered first the plight of Gorazde.

The United States had earlier suggested a five-day ultimatum for the Serbs to withdraw their guns at least 20 kilometres from the city centre or place them under U.N. control, diplomats said. If not, they would risk being bombed.

Diplomats had said a formula similar to that would also be applied to four other "safe areas" — Bihac, Srebrenica, Tuzla and Zepa.

In February, the Serbs agreed to a similar arrangement in Sarajevo, the sixth "safe area" after a 10-day NATO ultimatum. Russia stepped in to gain the compliance of its traditional Serb allies, sending in peacekeepers.

Russia's foreign minister condemned the Serb assault on Gorazde on Friday as "criminal" but said NATO air strikes would merely escalate the violence.

Geagea detained

(Continued from page 1)

the Lebanese Forces "as an institution" was linked to the church bombing or the Chamon assassination.

Until his arrest, he had been holed up at his headquarters in Ghidras north of Beirut since the Lebanese Forces was banned in mid-March.

Troops backed by tanks and armoured vehicles took up positions near the headquarters before officers acting on orders from judges investigating the two violent incidents went in and asked Dr. Geagea to accompany them.

He is being questioned by investigative judges Joseph Freiha and Munir Hnien, who will decide whether he will face charges.

"These accusations aim to totally hit the Lebanese Forces and silence the opposition," said Dr. Geagea.

100 injured in soccer violence

(Continued from page 10)

Major-General Abdul Rahman Al Adwan called for speedy measures to determine the causes and the results of the incidents.

Some sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, blamed the incidents on the leniency of referee Suleiman Abdul Hajja, "who was not firm in stopping violent tackles by players."

The first incident in the match, which was attended by more than 20,000 people, including Her Royal Highness Princess Haya and the head of the Omani Olympic Committee who is currently visiting Jordan, was between two players from Al Wihdat after Jyris Tadros scored Al Faisali's first goal in the fifth minute. Al Wihdat goalkeeper Nasser Al Ghandour and defender Yousef Al Ammouri started

blaming each other for the goal and ended up physically attacking each other. The referee did not interfere.

Later in the evening, Al Wihdat fans attacked the club premises in the Al Wihdat refugee camp damaging all its contents and facilities before they were dispersed by police.

The club's goalie Ghandour was also attacked by fans and taken to hospital as he was going to home in the camp.

The match was of no importance to the teams' standings since Al Faisali secured the title three weeks ago and was seeking only to increase its standings from 54 points. Al Wihdat had 41 points.

The Jordan Soccer Federation has to take a decision on a rematch. The JSF decided two weeks ago to fine Al Wihdat JD 2,000 and Al Faisali JD 1,000 for unsportsmanlike behaviour on the part of fans and administrators.

Kuwait cabinet under fire for underrepresentation of bedouins, Islamists

By William Maclean
Reuters

KUWAIT — Islamist politicians with wide representation in parliament have given a frosty reception to a new government seen as Kuwait's most liberal in years.

The deputies say they fear the dropping of two Islamist ministers in an April 13 reshuffle could be an attempt to reverse a post-Gulf war expansion of Muslim fundamentalist influence in the oil state of 1.5 million.

The deputies, who form the largest single block in the National Assembly, are also unhappy about what they see as curbs on media and charity work aimed at making Kuwaiti society more Islamic.

"I think there are attempts under way by the government to incite the Islamic movement in the country. And that's why they don't want those (ministers) with them who could embarrass them," deputy Mubarak Al Duwailah was quoted as

saying by the English-language Arab Times.

The Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM), Kuwait's version of the Muslim Brotherhood, said it would cooperate with the cabinet but the reshuffle was "well below expectations."

"The reshuffle failed to respond to a fair political and social representation and moreover ignored large and important sections of the Kuwaiti people," a statement said.

The Islamists, who have worked hard to build on their role in Kuwait's civilian resistance in Iraq's 1990-91 occupation, say cabinets should be finely balanced to include all groups.

They say the cabinet lacks not only Islamist clout but also sufficient representation for the large bedouin community.

Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah dropped ICM member Jasssem Al Azmi as minister of Islamic affairs and Abdallah Al Hajeri, a close associate of

the ICM although not a member, as minister of trade and industry.

He also moved Muslim fundamentalist Jasssem Al Oun from social affairs and labour to communications, electricity and water, where he has less room to act on religious grounds.

Mr. Azmi and Mr. Hajeri were also seen as representing the interests of traditional bedouin settlements based in outlying desert areas. Bedouin also have a presence in Kuwait city where long-settled urban Kuwaitis predominate.

Islamist deputy Khaled Al Adwa called in an article in Al Watan newspaper for "residents of remote areas to unite" in protest against lack of bedouin representation.

"Kuwait is a small nation and there is a great possibility to satisfy all sections of society. I criticised why remote areas have been ignored," he was later quoted as saying. Liberal commentators said his remarks were divisive.

Mr. Duwailah said the dropping of the two ministers was aimed at appeasing an Arab government that had been upset by recent Kuwaiti Islamist activities. According to a report in the Arab Times, the report did not identify the government.

Liberals hailed the cabinet as the right team to rebuild the affluent society along more progressive and self-reliant lines.

But Islamists, who can count on the support of at least 15 of the 50 elected deputies, tend to be suspicious of plans to privatise the economy and cut welfare state benefits.

Some of them have made outspoken allegations, denied by the government, of corruption in defence procurement. But it is their social agenda that has been the main focus of unease.

Mr. Duwailah complained about the screening in Kuwait of "the Terrorist," an Egyptian film about Muslim militancy in that country, and

an increase earlier this year in state monitoring of Kuwait's Islamic charities, a move seen by some Islamists as tantamount to an accusation of links between Kuwaiti charities and armed militant groups in Egypt and other Muslim countries.

Islamist charities deny links to armed militant groups. Islamist deputy Ahmad Baqer, the secretary of parliament, has called for an explanation of the cabinet changes and said the reshuffle had been conducted in an air of secrecy.

The government has not responded so far to the criticism.

Sheikh Saad, in a televised speech to the new cabinet, said without elaboration his new ministerial team should not be diverted by "rumours you may hear aiming at distorting and cultivating an atmosphere of instability or confusion."

"There are certain elements that are never satisfied with anything."

Vienna exhibitions show totalitarian architecture

By Jonathan Lynn
Reuters

VIENNA — Dictators are notorious for dabbling in architecture as they dream of ideal cities for their new societies.

Two exhibitions, which have just opened in Vienna, highlight the use of classical models and traditional design in the plans of totalitarian leaders including Josef Stalin and Adolf Hitler.

At the Kuensterhaus, "Art and Dictatorship" looks not only at architecture but also at Stalin's Soviet Union, Hitler's Germany, Benito Mussolini's Italy, and 1930s and 1940s Austria.

Vienna's Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) is showing "the tyranny of beauty," on architecture of the Stalin era. Hitler and Stalin, although ideological foes, had strikingly similar tastes in art and architecture.

Their ideal buildings, massive in scale to dwarf and impress their citizens, drew on classical antecedents to create a sense of public dignity and solemnity.

"Soviet people can produce more majestic and memorable examples of architectural creation than this," said Stalin. As he ordered the demolition of a 17th century tower in Moscow.

"The people shall stand before these monumental community achievements in reverence and awe," said Hitler of two giant sculptures, in words which summed up his whole approach to art and architecture.

Whereas the Nazis preferred Austere designs, overpowering in their simplicity, people if they were to get their message across.

Hence the "Socialist realism" decreed as the only possible style by Stalin, which was realistic in both its choice and portrayal of subjects, depicting smiling tractor drivers heroically ploughing the fields of a collective farm, or Soviet state founder Vladimir Lenin lecturing eager young Communists.

Art in Nazi Germany was also realistic in style, with "degenerate" modern works ridiculed, destroyed or sold abroad.

But German artists often preferred more escapist or classical themes, although here too the propaganda message was never far away.

For instance a "Judgement of Paris" from 1939 celebrates Nazi ideals of beauty by showing a youth wearing lederhosen sizing up three the Stalinists decorated their monumental buildings with rich ornamentation.

The result: A combination of neo-classicism and art deco, such as a design for Moscow's Aeroflot headquarters, could pass muster among today's fashionable "post-modern" buildings.

But both Hitler and Stalin rejected anything smacking of the lively avant-garde movements of the early 20th century — unlike Mussolini's Italy, where the futurists with their love of technology, speed and violence were closely associated with the Fascist regime.

Massive busts and futuristic portraits of the duce on show in the Kuensterhaus still have something terrifying about them.

For both the Nazis and the Communists, art and architecture were important instruments of propaganda. And that meant they had to be accessible to ordinary

naked German women rather than Greek goddesses.

"The Standard-Bearer" of 1934 is a portrait of Hitler as a Medieval knight in armour.

The Nazis had grandiose plans to rebuild parts of Berlin, Munich and Linz, the Austrian city near Hitler's birthplace of Braunau. Hitler, a failed artist, took a personal interest.

Similarly, the Communists, with the active participation of Stalin, drew up detailed plans for the urban renewal of Moscow.

Some of these, including the ornate metro stations and skyscrapers such as Moscow State University, were realised.

The skyscrapers were intended to match those in New York, and designs from the late 1940s show astonishing similarities to skyscrapers built in New York before

World War I.

This rivalry culminated in the designs for the Palace of the Soviets, a design by architect Boris Iofan for a 415 metre high tower topped by a massive 80 metre statue of Lenin, was accepted in 1933.

The palace, embodying the totalitarian order with the great leader at the top, was never built. Although the huge Redeemer Cathedral on its designated site was pulled down, eventually a swimming pool was put there.

Hanna Egger, curator of the MAK exhibition, points out the similarities of the Stalinist designs to classical buildings in ancient Rome, another dictatorship.

The palatial designs of the Moscow Metro, built in the mid-1930s, are reminiscent of the baths of Caracalla in Rome.

The designs in the Soviet

Union are like those of ancient Rome, huge dignified buildings erected for the people by despots to distract them from their normal living conditions.

Perhaps the most striking objects in the two shows are not the huge statues or monumental plans but a few simple drawings.

In the Kuensterhaus, in a room devoted to the victims of the dictatorships, are four drawings by children murdered in the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp, crayon drawings like any child's, but informed by a terrible sadness and despair.

One is called "No Butterflies Live Here."

In an adjoining room, terrible in their banality, are a couple of sketches in blue pencil on scraps of paper, the Fuehrer's own scribbled designs for the future of Linz.

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Peres urges Europe to invest in Mideast

BUCHAREST (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres Thursday urged European businessmen to pour capital into rebuilding the Middle East in what he foresaw as a new era of peace and prosperity.

"European governments have budgets but they don't give money, whereas firms have money but don't have ideas," Mr. Peres said in a debate at an international political and economic conference which he co-chaired with PLO leader Yasser Arafat.

"Therefore governments should encourage companies which invest in the Middle East and give them guarantees," he said in the debate, part of a Bucharest conference of the Swiss-based foundation, the Crans Montana Forum.

Mr. Peres said European companies should "export" redundant staff and help the Middle East with infrastructure projects including building nuclear power plants.

"I'm confident Europe is interested in the Middle East... and it will be still interested in the Middle East even in the period after (the conflict)," Mr. Arafat said.

"Why should one sell us weapons instead of spending that money on housing projects? This is a proposal that we want to make," Mr. Peres said to the loud applause of more than 1,000 politicians, officials and business people packing the huge, glittering and sumptuous conference hall.

In his speech, Mr. Arafat repeated his appeal for a new Marshall plan for the Middle East.

International pledges of \$2.3 billion in aid for the autonomous Palestinian areas fell "considerably" short of the \$13.45 billion which he said was needed to fund development projects until the year 2,000, Mr. Arafat said.

"It is the right of the Middle East after such a long period of wars to benefit from a new Marshall plan," he said.

"Not only Israel and the Palestinians will benefit from such a plan but all territories (in the Middle East) will enjoy its benefits," he said.

Mr. Arafat said rehabilitation plans for the region included infrastructure projects, new jobs and institutions. "We also plan to establish a strong private sector," he said.

Mr. Peres urged Turkey to help by supplying water to the parched Middle East. "I see the Turkish Foreign Minister (Hikmet Cetin) there," Mr. Peres said, pointing to the audience. "And I ask him: Why are you throwing the water into the sea? Is the sea buying that water?" Mr. Peres said.

Arab Gulf capital growth fund proposed

DOHA (R) — Investment house Jardine Fleming has said it is negotiating with Arab Gulf states to launch a Middle East fund to promote long-term capital growth.

"Our firm belief is that over the next few years (Gulf) governments will allow greater foreign participation in their market economies. We hope to get involved in it very much," said Nicholas Lumsden, Bahrain-based Gulf manager for Flemings Holdings.

"At present, initial funding is coming from traditional sources of lending, such as banks, to meet budget deficits or proceed with infrastructural projects," Mr. Lumsden said.

"But in the next stage, as and when they (Gulf states) need money they will explore diverse means of raising funds from the market," he added.

Mr. Lumsden said Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman will turn to the market for funds "sooner than we expect. We believe Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates will follow soon. It is something we are looking very, very closely (at) and talking with authorities."

"The region has enormous potential. We want to get deeply involved in it," he said.

U.S., German central banks fail to trigger dollar rally

This report by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch-Dubai, analyses movements and trends of key world currencies. Prices are given as of Wednesday, April 20, 1994.

Overview

Fundamental View: The dollar has failed to rally in response to either the Fed's surprise 25-basis point rate hike on April 18 or to the Bundesbank's recent rate cuts. The dollar's lackluster performance may reflect a slowdown of portfolio capital flows to the U.S. in view of uncertain prospects for U.S. equity and bond markets. The dollar should eventually rise further against the Deutschmark as German interest rates decline by more than expected.

Japan's new prime minister is expected to make little headway on trade liberalisation, suggesting that yen strength will continue as part of U.S. policy to boost exports and narrow Japan's huge current account surplus.

We maintain our 12-month targets of JPY/USD 95 and DM/USD 1.80.

Technical View: For the second week in a row, it was not a case of how many, but how much. Even though the U.S. dollar was able to post gains against five of the six major currencies that we most regularly monitor, the U.S. dollar index fell less than 0.1% as the greenback fell sharply versus the Japanese yen. Put/call ratios for the dollar remain oversold, but are beginning to deteriorate. At the same time short term rates of change have begun to weaken. Both of these points raise the prospects for renewed dollar weakness in coming days.

By contrast, medium term momentum is showing signs of bottoming, suggesting that the underlying February-April corrective pattern is coming to an end. Thus, any nearby weakness could well be the last leg to the correction. The inability, so far, to break 92.80 support further adds to the prospects for a bottom. While resistance at 95.50-95.90 is still important in the sense that a rally through that range would allow for a test of the February high (97.10), we are lowering first resistance to 94.40. A rally through that level would imply that a bottom is in place.

Deutschmark

Fundamental View: The dollar has failed to rally against the Deutschmark in response to the Fed's surprise rate hike on April 18 or in response to recent easing moves by the Bundesbank. With foreign investors still wary of U.S. bond and equity markets, perceptions that Fed policy has stabilised may be required before capital inflows begin to lend more support to the dollar. By the same token, the Bundesbank's surprise 25-basis point cut in its Lombard rate on April 14 and its subsequent 12-basis point cut in its repo rate on April 20 may be encouraging capital inflows into Germany's more hospitable financial markets. Eventually, the rate advantage of dollar assets over German assets — which is already apparent at all but the shortest maturities — should lead to a stronger dollar. With German growth still stagnant and German inflation likely to fall to 2% or under next year, Germany's need to maintain an overvalued currency will diminish.

We can therefore expect German short-term interest rates to fall by more than the markets expect, to perhaps 4% by this time next year, while the Bundesbank tolerates a gradual weakening of the Deutschmark against the dollar. We continue to look for the dollar to rise to the DM/USD 1.80 level in 6-months time and to continue to trade around that level in 12-months.

Technical View: The Deutschmark fell 0.1% against the U.S. dollar last week. Sentiment has recently been overbought, but may be set to improve. At the same time, short term momentum also seems ready to improve. Medium term momentum still has an upward bias. All of this implies that still higher highs are still possible in coming weeks, but the currency's rally trend is now mature. With all of this in mind, a rally through 1.65-1.66 DM/USD could still be enough to signal a challenge of last October's 1.59 high. Support is at 1.72-1.74; a decline through that range would imply a test of the currency's February lows at 1.765.

The area near 63.00 is still viewed as both chart and momentum resistance. With the cross having tested support at 60.90, a decisive break of that level would allow for a test of the February low at 59.40.

Japanese Yen

Fundamental View: The dollar remains little changed against the yen despite the Fed's surprise 25-point rate hike on April 18. The selection of Foreign Minister Hata as Japan's new prime minister is expected to have little impact on Japanese economic policy, especially since the ruling coalition is likely to remain split between conservatives and the Socialists. Mr. Hata's close ties to the bureaucracy suggest that there will be few bold new initiatives on trade liberalisation. Accordingly, market participants may continue to believe that the U.S. administration will favour yen

appreciation as a way of cutting Japan's trade surplus.

We remain neutral on the yen's prospects in the next few months. The yen is still within the 1009-110 range that both Japan and the U.S. appear content to live with for the time being. Interest rate trends could favour the dollar as the Fed continues to tighten monetary policy, but trade frictions could well heat up ahead of a planned meeting between President Clinton and Mr. Hata at the G-7 summit in Naples this July. Longer-term, persistent current account surpluses should keep upward pressure on the yen.

Even if Japan agrees to some market access measures for U.S. companies, we still expect a current account surplus of nearly \$120 billion this year. That should help the yen to continue to trade in the JPY/USD 100-110 range for most of this year and we expect it to reach a level as high as JPY/USD 95 by this time next year.

Technical View: The Japanese yen rallied 1.8% versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended April 15, making it the strongest currency of the six we most regularly discuss. Sentiment remains neutral. Short term momentum has been weak, but is showing signs of improvement. By contrast, medium term momentum is constructive, but appears to be close to peaking. Thus, any nearby strength will help to relieve some of the medium term pressures.

While a test of resistance at 101 Y/USD is still possible, the currency has been in a trading range since early February and the mounting downside pressures should be monitored closely. The area around 106.40 is viewed as first support, but it should be noted that it would require a decline through 110 to break a multi-year uptrend link.

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: The British pound remained generally stable this week, trading near DM/GBP 2.52 and US\$/GBP 1.48. We expect the pound to rise to DM/GBP 2.65 in 12 months as short-term DM interest rates fall by 120 basis points compared to little change in sterling rates. The pound should also be supported by a substantial yield premium over German bonds. We expect no further reductions in the basic interest rate because market responded unfavourably to the last cut, which was believed to be politically motivated.

Thus upcoming elections in May and June would preclude a cut at this time. Recent data on producer and retail price inflation were more favourable than expected. Sufficient excess capacity is available to accommodate the moderate 2.7% GDP growth we are expecting this year, suggesting little danger of accelerating inflation or the need for hikes in short-term interest rates.

We expect the pound to trade at US\$/GBP 1.47 in 12 months as pound appreciation against the DM is roughly offset by DM depreciation against the dollar.

Technical View: The British pound lost 0.4% versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended April 15. Sentiment is still neutral. The currency remains in its multi-month trading range, and short term momentum appears to have bottomed. However, medium term momentum continues to offer little definition. The lower end of the trading range at 1.46 US\$/£ is support; a break below that would allow for at least a test of the 1993 low near \$1.43 and possibly long term support at \$1.40-\$1.42.

The \$1.50-\$1.51 range is viewed as first resistance. A rally through second resistance at \$1.55 would set the stage for a challenge of the long term benchmark at \$1.60. The DM cross-rate pulled back to 2.52. Short term momentum is peaking even as medium term momentum oscillators remain weak. A break below 2.485 would set the stage for a challenge of 2.43-2.44. Resistance is at 2.53-2.56.

Donors pledge \$2.1b in aid for Bangladesh

PARIS (R) — Donor nations and agencies have pledged \$2.1 billion in aid to Bangladesh, urging the impoverished nation to quicken the pace of economic reform.

The World Bank, which chaired a two-day meeting of donors in Paris, said payment will be conditional on timely efforts by Dhaka to support its utilities sector.

Bangladesh Finance Minister Saifur Rahman said he was not discouraged by the conditionality of the pledge.

"Money by itself will not develop a nation," he told a news conference. "If we cannot use the resources efficiently, expeditiously... the objectives of the development partners giving the funds to us will not be achieved."

Bangladesh was urged at the meeting to clear bottlenecks in its administration system and to encourage private investment as a route to job creation and higher incomes.

The country, with a population of 111 million, has an annual per capita income of around \$220, among the lowest in the world, and its total debt burden stands at around \$13 billion.

At last year's meeting, which coincided with the issue of a damning report by Amnesty International on Dhaka's human rights record, donors expressed concern about such problems in the Chittagong hill tracts — scene of a 21-year-old tribal insurgency that has killed more than 3,500 people.

Uganda tax revenues rise

KAMPALA (R) — Uganda's tax revenues rose 47.2 per cent last year to 339.27 billion shillings (\$339 million) from 230.48 billion shillings (\$230 million), officials said. A ministry of finance and economic planning report said the jump in revenue was mainly caused by improved tax collection measures. Uganda Revenue Authority officials said they expect to collect up to 440 billion shillings (\$440 million) this year and much of the increase would be the result of higher taxes on imports.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY APRIL 23, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Upsets that occur today can work out much to your satisfaction in the long run, so don't be overly disturbed by any delay of obstacle that looms in front of you today. Play it cool.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Keep busy at home affairs early and improve them. The evening is fine for entertaining special friends and associates. Express happiness to all.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You have a fine opportunity now to gain your aims via communication. Take time today to visit friends which are not too far away.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be sure to improve personal relations with friends so there is more harmony. Do some reading you have neglected of late to improve your knowledge.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You can now handle personal affairs for which you have had little time of late. Schedule your time and activities well to benefit mostly.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Concentrate on gaining personal aims that have been in the back of mind for some time. Be more optimistic in activities you need to do.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Engage in civic affairs and add to your prestige. Your hunches are good now, and

should be followed. Be careful of outsiders who could be a threat to your reputation.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You are able to engage in new interests now that can be good for you in the future. Be careful in the spending of money or there could be none left.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Attend to those duties that are impossible to handle during regular week days. Strive for greater accord with loved one and family.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Others more prone to listen to your ideas today, so be prepared and spend as much time with them as possible to your both.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Study your environment and make plans for improvements. Take health treatments which make you feel better and make you more physically fit.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Engage in activities you enjoy the most and make new acquaintances of worth. Avoid one who has an inflated ego and make you feel small.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Show special thought for family members and increase harmony. A new interest could be fine for you at this time and provide you with some success.

Guess what's cooking at the Marriott?

A lot at Al-Mansaf Restaurant where the evenings are sizzling with deliciously appetizing specials.



Every Saturday is CHINESE NIGHT.
Chinese specialties all for JD 11,000++ per person.

On Sundays, we keep the fires hot on the coals for STEAK NIGHT.

A La Carte.



Thursdays are time for our poolside barbecue at our AL MANSAF PATIO starting from 7:00 p.m. for JD 9,000++ per person.

Every Friday from noon to 4:00 p.m. bring the whole family to the best BRUNCH in town at the Marriott. Price JD 9,750 inclusive. Children below one meter eat for free.



From Saturday to Thursday, take a break from work and try our EXECUTIVE LUNCH, it's exciting, satisfying and incredible value at only JD 8,500++ per person.

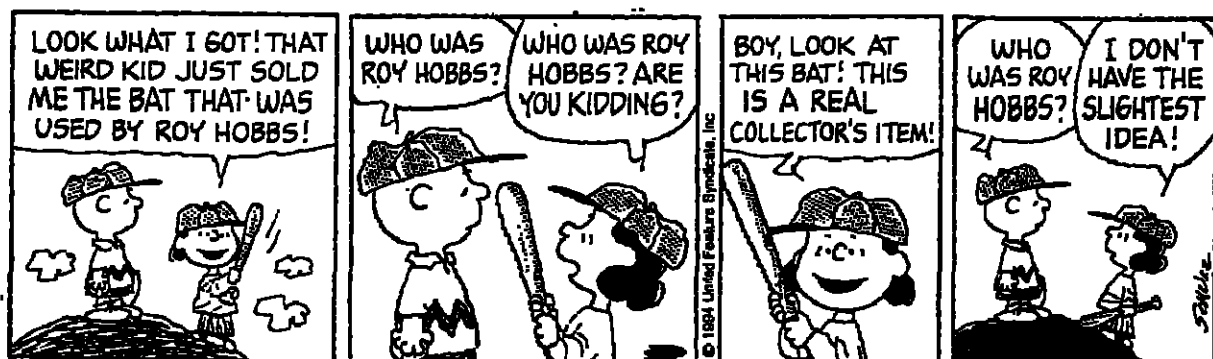


P.S.Don't forget our Easter Sunday lunch for JD 9,750 inclusive. Your children can also enjoy our traditional egg hunt.



P.O.Box: 926333 Amman - Jordan Tel: 607607 Fax: 670100

Peanuts



Mutt'n'Jeff



JUMBLE

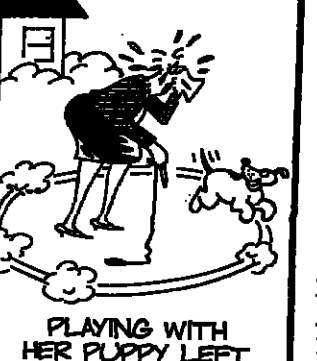
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ROLYG

GHEED

TORMAN

QUILID



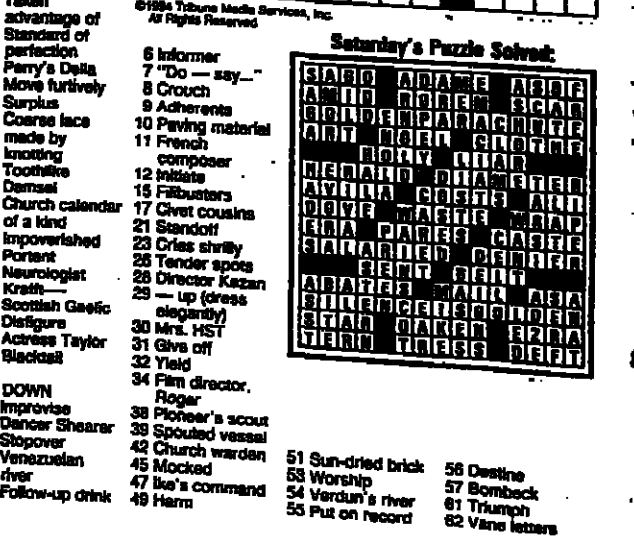
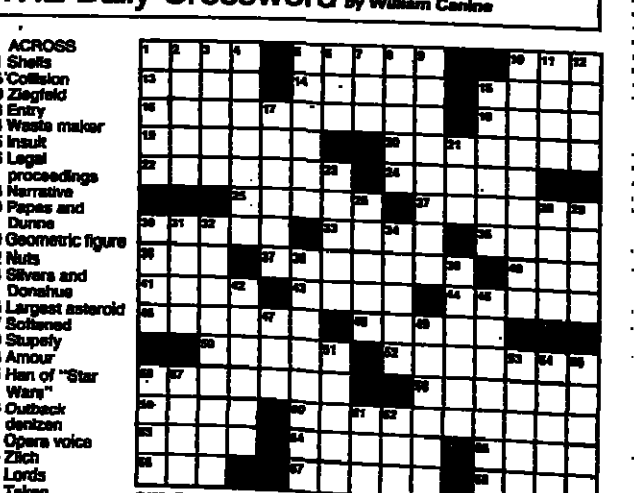
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumble: PYLON SWOON EROTIC LAVISH

Answer: Another name for an eye doctor — A "VISION"-ARY

THE Daily Crossword



AFM trading remains stagnant

Japan premier-designate Hata appeals for coalition unity

TOKYO (R) — Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata, set to take over as Japanese prime minister, appealed to his fractious coalition Friday to unite and form a large political group ahead of the next general election.

After narrowly averting a break-up over policy differences, coalition leaders buried the hatchet and agreed to nominate Mr. Hata, 58, as their candidate in a parliamentary vote Monday to appoint a successor to Morihiro Hosokawa.

"I've decided to accept the terrifying responsibilities that come with leading the nation," Mr. Hata told a news conference.

"I hope the coalition will be able to agree to cooperate and to create a larger (group) before the next elections."

Although formal confirmation must await Monday's vote, Mr. Hata is certain to win because of the coalition's majority in the decisive lower house.

Politicians and analysts, however, say the latest political struggle has left the fragile alliance even shakier than before, a factor likely to destabilize the new government.

"The fact it took two weeks to agree to a vague policy plan means Hata is going to have difficulty governing," said columnist Minoru Morita.

Rei Shiratori, politics professor at Tokai University, said Mr. Hata's government would be short-lived.

"There's going to be more friction along the lines we saw these past two weeks... and I don't think the Hata cabinet will last very long."

Mr. Hosokawa's sudden resignation on April 8 triggered a power struggle and two weeks of policy wrangling between the coalition's mainstream conservatives and the leftist Socialists.

By early Friday, with the Socialists threatening to quit the coalition for the fourth time in as many months, the two feuding sides finally agreed to a watered-down policy platform that failed to resolve the two most contentious issues — how to reform the tax system and what policy to adopt on North Korea.

Mr. Hata attempted to play down the divisions threatening his government.

"I don't think the coalition is badly split," he said. "Over the last eight months

of coalition rule, we had trouble agreeing on a number of issues like (opening the) rice market," he said. "So now we have an agreement to deal with problems like tax reform which we'll have to resolve by June."

Mr. Hata and powerful backroom partner Ichiro Ozawa, co-leaders of the Shinseitō (Renewal Party), wanted the coalition to agree to hike a three per cent value-added tax to fund proposed income tax cuts and set aside funds to support an ageing society.

At first the Socialists balked at raising a tax they had fought unsuccessfully to kill in 1989. Then they relented and demanded the coalition agree first to seek a "national understanding" — something the conservatives finally accepted.

On North Korea, the Socialists insisted the policy document name China, along with the United States and South Korea, as a country Japan must consult in the event of a worsening crisis on Pyongyang's suspected nuclear arms programme.

In the final communiqué, the feuding camps agreed merely that Japan would consult "other Asian countries". Mr. Ozawa shrugged off the

coalition's painful process of consensus-building.

"We're working towards creating a good political system," he said on television. "We're just in the process now."

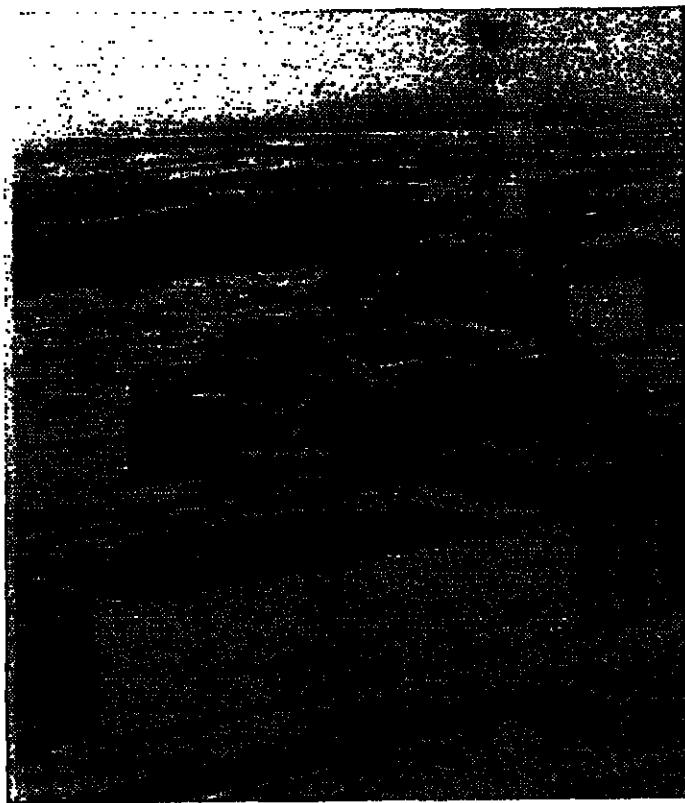
In proposing a new group to field joint candidates in future elections, Mr. Hata aims at creating a large conservative party to compete with the once-dominant Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), still the biggest in parliament.

Elections could be called later this year or in 1995 after a special panel completes work on a new electoral map promised in Mr. Hosokawa's political reform package passed in January.

While coalition conservatives welcomed Mr. Hata's call for greater unity, the Socialists were wary.

"We need more time to decide," Keigo Ouchi, Democratic Socialist Party leader, said curtly.

Meanwhile, the yet-to-be-formed Hata government had advance warning Friday of squalls ahead when the LDP served notice it planned to call Mr. Hosokawa to parliament to testify on the loans scandal that forced his resignation.



File picture dated March 1992 shows an aerial view of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant where the greatest civilian nuclear catastrophe took place on April 26, 1986. The Ukrainian government refuses even a temporary closure of the plant despite two recent incidents and the pressure of international nuclear experts (AFP photo)

Chernobyl to stay open, Ukraine tells IAEA

VIENNA (R) — Ukraine is refusing to close down its incident-prone Chernobyl nuclear plant, scene of the world's worst nuclear disaster in 1986, a spokesman for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Friday.

"The Ukrainians are taking a firm line, that Chernobyl will continue to operate... even as and when nuclear power stations are brought onstream," IAEA spokesman David Kyd told Reuters as two-day emergency talks in Vienna drew to a close.

Chernobyl's operators were due to issue a statement in Kiev adopting an uncompromising line on keeping the plant open, officials there said.

"I have seen the statement and we are getting the same message here. No deals," Mr. Kyd said.

He quoted the Ukrainian statement as saying: "If you want to help us, we are delighted, but whatever happens Chernobyl will continue to produce electricity in this decade."

Officials of the IAEA, the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, were due to hold a news conference after nuclear experts from 13 countries met Ukrainian officials to discuss "numerous safety deficiencies" found last month at the plant by an eight-man inspection team.

Key areas of concern are two reactors kept running on the orders of the Ukrainian parliament last year beyond their planned closure date, and a crumbling concrete tomb enclosing reactor four, which blew up eight years ago, killing 31 and spewing a radioactive cloud over Europe.

Ukraine, Russia agree to share fleet ships

SEVASTOPOL, Ukraine (R) — Ukraine and Russia agreed Friday to a share-out of the ships making up the Black Sea Fleet, but were unable to decide where each was to base its own navy, military officials said.

A member of Ukraine's delegation to two days of talks, who asked not to be identified, said Ukraine was to keep 164 of 894 vessels making up the fleet — about 20 per cent. It would sell the remainder of its 50 per cent share to Russia.

The Ukrainian delegation member said a special commission of experts had met through the night to achieve the breakthrough on ship numbers.

He said Moscow had rejected a Ukrainian proposal to move the Russian fleet to the port of Donuzlav, like Sevastopol on Ukraine's Crimean peninsula.

The talks took place a week after President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine and Boris Yeltsin of Russia agreed in

Troop movement heralds Sri Lanka offensive

COLOMBO (R) — A mass withdrawal of troops from eastern Sri Lanka this week may herald a long-awaited offensive against Tamil guerrillas in their northern Jaffna peninsula stronghold, military officials and analysts said Friday.

Thousands of troops have been moving in convoys to the eastern port town of Trincomalee during the past week, they said.

"If troops being withdrawn are going to Trincomalee it probably means they are being shipped north for a major offensive," said a defence analyst.

The move comes as the armed forces are shopping for more aircraft, armoured vehicles and gunboats to crush Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels who have been fighting since 1983 for an independent homeland in the island's north and east.

But analysts said the redeployment could weaken military control of the east, where troops have gained the upper hand after being mauled by marauding groups of Tigers two years ago.

Six of seven regular infantry battalions and three of five volunteer infantry battalions deployed in the Amparai, Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts have been pulled out and some 20 camps emptied, officials said.

Elite army commandos and special forces have also moved out.

Special Task Force (STF) police commandos were replacing the army in eastern jungle and coastal areas, while regular police were taking over duties in urban areas, officials said.

1 in 5 Beijing marriages ends in divorce

BEIJING (AP) — Divorce, once virtually taboo, is now the fate of nearly one in five marriages in Beijing, according to survey results reported Friday. The ratio of husbands who hit their wives is also one in five, according to the survey, but it was not clear if the divorcing couples were mainly those with violent relationships. The survey of 2,100 households, conducted by the Beijing Society of Research on Marriage and Family, also found that most husbands leave household chores to their wives and that only 3 per cent of wives dare to initiate sex. The survey results were reported by the official China Daily newspaper. It did not give any details of how the survey was conducted, nor did it give the survey's statistical margin of error. Marriage was traditionally a family affair in China, and unhappy couples had no option of divorcing. Although the Communists who took power in 1949 advocated individual choice in marital matters and some Communist leaders — notably Mao Tse-tung — left their wives, among ordinary people divorce remained rare, tinged with unrespectability. Only since the 1980s has divorce become widely accepted.

Bad spelling brings bank robber's downfall

BRAINTREE, Mass. (AP) — Spelling does count. A bank robber gave himself away because he couldn't spell "thief," police said. Robert C. Mercon, 19, was charged with two bank robberies Wednesday after police matched the handwriting on the two holdup notes to that on a note found in Mr. Mercon's pocket after he was picked up on shoplifting charges. The biggest clue: In all three notes, the writer had switched the "f" and the "e" in "thief." Witnesses later identified Mr. Mercon as the bank robber. He pleaded innocent and was released on bail. A total of less than \$2,000 was taken in the robberies by a man who handed tellers a note demanding money and warning he had a gun. The note in Mr. Mercon's pocket was to be used for robbing a store, police said.

Roseanne Arnold drops divorce action

LOS ANGELES (R) — Television comedian Roseanne Arnold dropped divorce proceedings against her husband Tom Arnold Thursday, blaming "outsiders, nasty gossip and lies" for her attempt to end their marriage. "Please forgive me to everyone I love. I just lost it completely," she said in a statement issued by her publicist, Kevin Campbell, three days after filing for divorce, claiming she had been beaten by her spouse. Roseanne had been widely reported to have fled to Europe after filing her divorce petition. But said in the statement she had gone into seclusion in the Sequoia National Forest in northern California. In the latest twist in what has become a real-life soap opera, Roseanne declared, "I must apologise to my husband Tom and my dear friend Kim Silva for letting outsiders, nasty gossip and lies finally break me down and leave me reeling." "Tom never hurt my children. And often our fights in the past have led to physical action which we both are learning to control," she said. Her spokesman said the divorce filing was not a publicity stunt by the couple, who have been known to tweak the news media before.

Constipated drug suspect charged

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand police Friday charged a man whom they suspect of swallowing a heroin-filled condom but who has not passed a bowel motion for three weeks. Grant Stockdale had been detained under observation — without being arrested or charged — for 21 days, the maximum permitted under New Zealand's anti-drug laws. On Friday, three and a half hours before he was due to be released, Mr. Stockdale was formally arrested and charged with possession of heroin for supply. He was remanded in custody until next Friday. Police, who have been waiting in vain for Mr. Stockdale to excrete the suspected drugs, would not say whether the arrest was a result of his passing a bowel motion. "One thing's for sure — it had better be pretty solid and substantial evidence," civil liberties lawyer Barry Wilson said in a television interview.

Perry gives cool welcome to N. Korean nuclear offer

TOKYO (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry gave a guarded welcome Friday to a North Korean offer to let United Nations experts look at key evidence in a row over its alleged secret atomic bomb project.

North Korea invited the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Thursday to send experts to watch while spent fuel rods at its main nuclear reactor in Yongbyon are unloaded and replaced.

The United States and its allies believe North Korea is planning to build, or has already made, nuclear bombs.

Earlier this week, North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung repeated his secretive country's strong denials that it had any nuclear weapons ambitions.

Mr. Perry said Friday, however, that without outside surveillance, the North Koreans could extract enough plutonium from the fuel to make four or five nuclear bombs.

"We welcome these talks between IAEA and North Korea," Mr. Perry told a news conference in Tokyo, where he held talks with Japanese officials on regional security.

He added, though, that the IAEA would need to establish to what extent it would have

access to sensitive parts of the Yongbyon site, north of the capital Pyongyang.

"The IAEA has agreed to the meeting but has stated very clearly that for them to be willing to go to Yongbyon again they need to have a clear understanding of what it is they will be allowed to do when they get there," he said.

The IAEA has already been foiled once this year.

"We call on North Korea to allow the IAEA to not only be present at the unloading but to finish the inspections that they agreed to during the Feb. 15 agreement," said Mr. Perry.

"It is very clear that the IAEA needs more than just a physical presence at Yongbyon at the time of the removal," Mr. Perry also said that, if the latest inspection hopes were dashed, the United States might independently organise sanctions on North Korea if it could not persuade the IAEA Security Council to do so.

"If we and Japan and South Korea requested sanctions and the United Nations for one reason or another was not able to agree to it, then I believe that we would then seek a way of imposing some sort of multinational sanctions even if they did not involve every nation in the world," he said.

S. Korea replaces premier

SEOUL (R) — Lee Hoi-Chang resigned as South Korean Prime Minister Friday and was replaced by his deputy Lee Yung-Dug, a presidential spokesman said.

The shock resignation revealed an unexpected rift in the leadership of South Korea's civilian government, currently under pressure from the row with Communist North Korea over Pyongyang's alleged development of nuclear arms.

Lee Hoi-Chang tendered his resignation to President Kim Young-Sam by letter Friday and it was accepted, the spokesman said.

The outgoing Mr. Lee, who took office last December, caused a political stir Thursday when he said he wanted to increase his control over state affairs.

News reports said Mr. Lee has been at odds with some of

his cabinet members over national policies. Analysts said Mr. Lee had been unhappy that he had been ignored when policies were being formulated.

Mr. Lee's unexpected resignation came hours after a weekly meeting of top security officials on the North Korean nuclear problem was cancelled, following his instruction that the agendas of such meetings should first be approved by him.

The meeting was to have been headed by Mr. Lee Yung-Dug and included the foreign and defence ministers. Mr. Lee Hoi-Chang was not to have attended the meeting.

Local press reports said the outgoing prime minister was unhappy because several important policies had been announced before receiving his approval.

White right makes veiled threat to S. African voters

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's hardline white right, spurning 11th-hour overtures to join next week's historic elections, has told voters it could be dangerous to vote in the poll to end over three centuries of white power.

Kobus Beyers, a member of the pro-apartheid Conservative Party, warned there would be attempts to sabotage the April 26-28 all-race elections in some parts of the country when the polls open Tuesday, state radio reported Friday.

Mr. Beyers, speaking in the Afrikaners' Orange Free State heartland, said "soft targets" would be avoided, but gave no details of plans to disrupt the poll which the African National Congress (ANC) is widely expected to win.

Police investigating a bomb attack on an office of the Independence Electoral Commission in the white farming town of Hoopstad in the Orange Free State said the type of explosives used pointed to the white right.

A spokesman said they were closing in on those responsible for the Thursday morning attack, the first of its kind. "The right wing are mostly the people who make use of commercial explosives. We have a good idea who the culprits are," a police spokesman said, adding arrests looked imminent.

A leading security analyst, meanwhile, predicted the government, which has the power to detain suspects without trial for up to 10 days, would crack down on the white right.

"We could be looking at a security clampdown any day now," Jackie Cilliers, director of the independent Institute for Defence Policy, told Reuters "it would be extremely stupid of the government or the TEC (Transitional Executive Council) not to do something against radicals threatening the elections."

Conservative Party leader and head of the right-wing Afrikaner People's Front (APF) Ferdi Hartzenberg Thursday rejected suggestions that he should throw in his lot with General Constand Viljoen's Freedom Front, which is contesting the poll to pursue its goal of a white homeland or

Volkstaat.

"If you participate in the election, you vote for nothing," Mr. Hartzenberg said. The neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement says thousands of supporters are mustering in right-wing heartlands to counter any ANC-led "Communist government."

Mr. Viljoen, who said earlier this week it might take 20 years to realise a Volkstaat, is holding talks with the ANC to try to win agreement in principle on an ethnic homeland for Afrikaners.

Both the government and the ANC have ruled out splitting the new South Africa into ethnic mini-states.

Mr. Viljoen, a former army chief, says his campaign has been boosted by the last-minute election entry of Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party, until earlier this week perceived as an ally of anti-election white rightwingers.

Mr. Buthelezi, who joined the poll Tuesday, took his campaign into ANC territory in the eastern and northern Transvaal.

Projecting Inkatha as a national force rather than just a Zulu-based party, Mr. Buthelezi said Thursday South Africa would fall under Communist control if the ANC were to win the poll. "The ANC intends to perpetuate central government tyranny... They intend to subject the people to this region Kwazulu-Natal to dictatorial Communist rule," he told a campaign rally.

Mr. Buthelezi lifted his electoral boycott when he, his main black rival Nelson Mandela and President F.W. de Klerk sealed a deal giving constitutional protection to the Zulu kingdom.

He is expected by pollsters to win his greatest support in the Kwazulu homeland, of which he is chief minister, and the surrounding Natal province where a state of emergency was declared on March 31 to safeguard the elections.

The area is home to many of the country's 8.3 million Zulus, whose loyalty Inkatha and the ANC have fought over in a power struggle that has killed 10,000 people there in 10 years.

Hundreds queue on Red Square to remember Lenin

MOSCOW (AP) — Hundreds of pensioners with Soviet flags and red carnations lined up on Red Square to pay their respects to Vladimir Lenin Friday, the 124th anniversary of the Soviet founder's birth.

Russian newspapers published several stories about Lenin and the meaning of the day in post-Soviet Russia. During the Communist era, it was among the most important dates in the Soviet Union.

On a bright, crisp day, crowds began forming early Friday to file through Lenin's chilly marble mausoleum to view his body preserved under glass. Many brought flowers, flags and portraits of Lenin.

President Boris Yeltsin, who has overseen the dismantling of the state system Lenin built, had no special plans to mark the day.

"It's not within the range of his interests," spokesman Dmitry Orlyonov said.

The newspaper Rabochaya Tribuna decried the current official indifference towards the date and the hostility towards Lenin. The government has removed the Honour Guard who stood outside the mausoleum and the mayor has suggested evicting Lenin for burial in St. Petersburg, the former imperial capital that once bore his name: Leningrad.

"Is this fair? Have those who have embarked upon the road of downright blemishing their own history made a mistake?" the newspaper asked. "All these questions will have to be answered yet."

The former Communist organ Pravda printed a front-page picture of Lenin and urged Russians to remember his contributions.

"Lenin must be defended," Pravda said. "Defending Lenin does not mean attacking his abusers, it means to reveal the

source of the lies, slander, frauds and swindles. Yes, my friends, when we defend Lenin, we defend the entire society from total degradation."

In a television interview Thursday night, historian Dmitry Volkogonov said Lenin sought Josef Stalin's help to commit suicide in the last months of his life.

Stalin in 1923 received a note from Lenin's wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya, urging him to grant Lenin's request for cyanide, Mr. Volkogonov said.

Mr. Volkogonov, a Yeltsin military adviser and author who has had extensive access to formerly secret archives, said Lenin's request could have been prompted by his brain disease and the chaotic political situation in the country.

Lenin spent his final months cut off from political activity because of his declining health.

At the same time, Stalin was beginning to accumulate power and wanted Lenin out of his way.

"For him (Lenin), to stay out of politics and power amounted to death," the ITAR-TASS news agency said. Stalin apparently rejected Lenin's request; the Soviet founder died on Jan. 21, 1924, after suffering a series of strokes.

One Russian newspaper took an irreverent swipe at Lenin and those who continue to support him.

"Those who think he was a saint are mistaken," Moskowsky Komсомоlets said. "Lenin committed so many crimes, lied so much and fornicated so much that he cannot be canonised (even in the Communist faith)."

"Lenin's deeds: Ruthlessness, treachery, total lack of repentance... are more typical of a pagan deity," it said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Knight picks up poisoned chalice

LONDON (AFP) — Billy Knight was named here Friday as Britain's Davis Cup captain. He succeeds Tony Pickard in what may be British sport's most thankless task. Pickard left last month following a war of words with director of national coaching Richard Lewis. Knight, 58, will also resume his crucial position as manager of men's training. The double appointment effectively makes him the new supreme of British men's tennis. A former British No. 1 who played in 40 Davis Cup matches spanning 11 years, Knight said: "I am happy to rejoin the national training department to try to complete the job I started three years ago. I will certainly give that, and the increased responsibility of the captaincy of the Davis Cup team, my very best efforts."

Pele announces wedding plans

NEW YORK (R) — Brazilian soccer legend Pele revealed Thursday that he plans to get married at the end of the month. The 53-year-old Pele, who was appearing on a syndicated home shopping television show hosted by comedian Joan Rivers, announced that he will marry 33-year-old Assiria Nascimento. He said he had known Nascimento for more than 10 years. Pele, who retired from soccer in 1977 after a star-studded 21-year career which included 1,285 goals and two World Cup championships, said the wedding will take place in Brazil. He did not announce the exact date or site of the nuptials. He did reveal, however, that the ceremony will result in the loss of a bet he made with actor Sylvester Stallone on the set of the film Victory in which they starred. Pele said he bet Stallone that he would never remarry.

World Cup charm for Germany

NAIROBI (AFP) — An African witch doctor is offering to put a spell on Germany's opponents during the World Cup finals. Shariff Omar Abubakar, consultant sorcerer to several Kenyan soccer clubs, has warned German coach Bert Vogts that the omens for the World Cup holders this time are not good. But Abubakar makes it clear in a letter to Vogts that the German fortunes would improve dramatically if they availed themselves of his services. "I am ready to help by bewitching your adversaries," he wrote. Vogts has yet to respond and the reactions of Germany's World Cup group opponents — Bolivia, Spain and South Korea — are awaited with interest. There is no evidence of Germany having resorted to sorcery in their previous World Cup triumphs of 1954, 1974 and 1990.

League drops handshake ban

LOS ANGELES (R) — Officials of a southern California schools sports league have dropped a ban on handshakes between opposing teams after being accused of poor sportsmanship. The ban on after-game handshakes, imposed last month, was reported worldwide and inspired angry calls from as far away as Britain and Australia. "This has caused more trouble than anything that should be causing trouble," said Agoura High School Principal Jim Christiansen, who is president of the eight-school Marmonte League in Ventura County, about 30 miles (48km) west of Los Angeles. The ban was imposed because some students with bad feelings after games were shaking their fists instead of their hands and a number of scuffles broke out. But on Tuesday the eight principals engaged in a telephone conference call and voted to return to the traditional symbol of good sportsmanship.

UEFA turn down Juventus appeal

GENEVA (R) — UEFA Wednesday turned down an appeal by Juventus against a four-match ban imposed on German defender Juergen Kohler. Kohler was suspended for four European club matches after being sent off while playing for his club against fellow Italians Cagliari in the UEFA Cup quarter-finals in Turin last month. Kohler pushed an opponent during a flare-up between both sides and received a red card. Cagliari won the match 2-1 to knock out Juventus 3-1 on aggregate. UEFA also turned down an appeal by Austrian club Casino Salzburg against fines totalling 55,000 Swiss francs (\$38,000) for misconduct by their team and poor organization during the UEFA Cup match with Eintracht Frankfurt of Germany in March. Otto Baric, the Croatian trainer of Salzburg who has since gone on to reach the UEFA Cup final, was earlier banned from the touchline for five matches for spitting at an opposing player during the same match.



Saudi Arabia's defender Almoahel (right) duels with Iceland's Stefanon during the friendly match between Iceland and Saudi Arabia at the Mayol Stadium in Toulon, south of France, Wednesday. Saudi Arabia won 2-0 (AFP photo)

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSH
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AVOID THE PROBLEM

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ A 10 6
♥ A 10 4 2
♦ 7 5 3
♣ 6 2

WEST EAST
♠ 3 ♠ 9 4
♥ 3 ♥ 7 5
♦ K 10 8 6 ♦ J 9 2
♣ Q 9 7 4 ♣ K 10 8 5 3

SOUTH
♠ K Q 8 7 5 2
♥ 6 3
♦ A Q 4
♣ A J

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
4 ♠ Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: Queen of 7

Even something as simple as a finesse is approached by the expert and the average player from diametrically opposite points of view. Most players consider the gain if the finesse wins. The chosen few think about the cost if the finesse loses!

North's jump raise to three spades was a limit bid showing 10-12 points. South had no aspirations beyond game, but even that seemingly easy contract was in jeopardy without careful play.

West led the queen of hearts and it is obvious the spade game is safe if the diamond finesse were to win.

declarer can lose at most one trick in each side suit. However, the pessimist realizes that, were the finesse to lose, the contract would inevitably be defeated. It's time to look for an alternative line to land the contract.

That hinges on keeping East off lead, so the first move is to duck the heart lead in dummy. East cannot rise with the king without setting up a finesse position in hearts which is sure to succeed, so that defender also must play low. West can do no better at trick two than continue with the nine of hearts, taken by the ace.

The next step is to eliminate clubs as an exit suit for the defense, in the process keeping East off lead, so declarer leads a club from dummy and when East follows low inserts the jack. Best defense is for West to win and return a club.

After taking the ace of clubs, declarer crosses to dummy with a trump and ruffs a heart, fetching the king. Another trump to the table draws the last fang. Now declarer leads the ten of hearts and, when East does not follow, discards a diamond from hand, trapping West in an endplay. West must either lead a diamond into declarer's major tenace or a club, yielding a ruff-shut. Either way the swep of a second heart loser for none in diamonds delivers the contract.

Miller wins women's all-around title at World Gymnastics Championship

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — Shannon Miller produced two spectacular vaults Friday night to win the women's all-around title at the World Gymnastics Championship for the second straight year.

Miller needed to score 9.775 with her two vaults to win — and scored 9.812.

The elite 17-year-old high school student from Edmond, Okla., received 39.274 points for the four disciplines to retain the title she won last year in Birmingham, England.

Lavinia Milosovi of Romania, who was neck-and-neck with Miller throughout the competition, won the silver medal with 39.236 points — just 0.038 behind.

Dina Kocherikova of Russia took the bronze medal with a 39.125.

Miller scored 9.850 on the uneven bars, 9.862 on the balance beam and 9.750 for her floor exercise.

The last person to win back-to-back women's all-around world titles was Ludmilla Tourischeva of the Soviet Union in 1970 and 1974, when the championships were held every four years.

Gina Gogean, their routines Friday afternoon, but eventually finished fourth at 39.061. Miller's teammate, Domini-

que Dawes, was fifth with 38.968 points. She was the joint leader after three routines but stumbled on the first of her two vaults, which scored only 9.250. She improved with her second vault for an average of 9.506, but lost her chance.

Dawes, a 17-year-old from Silver Spring, MD., was in tears after her vaults and was comforted by coach Kelli Hill.

The American led at last year's world championship in Birmingham, England, before miscalculating a vault and finishing fourth.

"I felt OK on all the events except vault," Dawes said. "I

just pulled it too hard."

Coach Hill said the vault had been Dawes' weakness going into the event.

"Dominique has struggled with this vault all week. It's like deja vu from last year," Hill said.

Almost 300 competitors from 53 countries are participating in the six-day championship, which continues through Sunday.

Individual apparatus finals are slated for Saturday and Sunday, with Vitaly Scherbo of Belarus, winner of six gold medals at the Barcelona Olympics, contesting four men's finals.

Unlucky Courier defeated by Medvedev

MONACO (AFP) — Andrei Medvedev overcame Jim Courier in an absorbing three-hour battle to reach the Monte Carlo Open semi-final here Friday.

The 19-year-old Ukrainian won 6-7, 7-5, 7-6 in 3hr 20min and then apologised to his opponent.

"I made so many lucky points and Jim was always giving me. He's the greatest competitor I've ever seen and a great person," Medvedev said.

"There was never more than one or two points in it."

The last set took an hour and ended when the 23-year-old American hit a forehand out.

Medvedev, who had knee earlier in the year, showed tremendous spirit to slog it out with Courier who last Sunday lost the Nice Open final to Spain's Sergi Berasategui.

The Ukrainian now plays Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov who had a straight sets win over David Rickl of the Czech Republic.

Kafelnikov, who eliminated Michael Stich and Andre Agassi on his way to the quarter-finals, won 7-6, 6-3.

Miami clinches last playoff spot in east

MIAMI (R) — The Miami Heat clinched the final playoff berth in the Eastern Conference and shrank the already narrow advantage of the conference-leading Hawks in the process with a 94-89 win over Atlanta in NBA action.

Glen Rice had 21 points, including two pressure free throws in the final seconds to seal the win, and Steve Smith added 16 for the Heat, who held off a late Hawks charge.

Danny Manning had 21 points to top the scoring for Atlanta, (56-25), who had their lead for the best mark in the east — and home court advantage in the playoffs — cut to half a game over both the New York Knicks and Chicago Bulls (both 55-25).

Miami held a seven-point lead 89-82 with just over a minute left, but Atlanta cut the deficit to three, 89-86, on a pair of Craig Ehlo free throws and a Manning jumper.

Manning nailed a three-pointer to trim the margin to two with 14 seconds left. Rice hit one of two free throws to push the lead to 92-89. Atlanta had a final chance to tie the game, but Mookie Blystock missed two three-point tries and Rice added two more free throws to end the scoring.

In New York, the Knicks rebounded from a loss to Atlanta Tuesday by pulverising the Philadelphia 76ers 130-82 to move right back into contention for Eastern Conference supremacy.

Patrick Ewing scored 14 of his 26 points in the third quarter and grabbed 15 rebounds as the Knicks matched a franchise mark for victory margin with their 48-point cushion.

Ewing scored 12 points as the Knicks posted 28 of the first 34 points of the second half. The Knicks, who led 55-45 at halftime, shot 79 per cent in the period and took a 96-63 lead into the fourth quarter.

At Utah, Jeff Hornacek scored 23 points to lead a balanced attack as the Jazz topped the Portland Trail Blazers 122-111.

Karl Malone scored 21 points. John Stockton added 20 for the Jazz, who are fifth in the Western Conference and will most likely meet Phoenix or San Antonio in the first round of the playoffs.

Clyde Drexler scored 31 points for the Trail Blazers, who are locked into seventh place in the west and will face Houston in the first round in the playoffs.

At Golden State, Jeff Grayer scored 19 points to lead six players in double figures as the Warriors beat the Sacramento Kings 121-96 to remain alive in the battle for the fifth playoff spot in the Western Conference.

Jud Buechler added a season-high 18 for the Warriors, who need to win their last two games while the Utah Jazz lose their last two to capture the fifth playoff spot.

In Houston, Hakeem Olajuwon had 21 points and 14 rebounds and Robert Horry scored 20 to pace the Rockets to a 126-100 romp over the Dallas Mavericks.

The Rockets improved to 58-22 and secured the second-best record in the league.

In Boston, Alonzo Mourning had 21 points and 11 rebounds as the Charlotte Hornets beat the Celtics 95-89 but Charlotte's quest for a playoff berth ended with Miami's win.

The win was the Hornets' eighth in the last nine games, but their late-season surge was not enough to catch the Heat in the race for the eighth playoff berth.

Muggsy Bogues had 13 points and six assists for the Hornets, and Larry Johnson added 11 points and 13 rebounds.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Majali reviews tourism services

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Friday joined citizens and tourists in a trip by train around Amman and Al Mushatta Palace. The trip, which ended at the airport, was organised by Royal Jordanian (RJ). Dr. Majali inspected RJ services at the airport and met with cabin crews. Dr. Majali called for upgrading the standards of services, noting that the success of tourism does not only depend on tourist attractions but also on providing services.

Former Parliament member passes away

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Speaker Taber Al Masri on Friday announced the death of former House member Mohammad Al Maayatah. The late former deputy, 83, served in several military posts, including that of the director of the Public Security Department (PSD).

Energy delegation heads for Pakistan

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources headed by Secretary-General Abdul Wahab Al Zoubi left for Pakistan on Friday for orientation on Pakistan's nuclear ability and technology. The delegation will gain firsthand information on Pakistan's experience in using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, particularly in such areas as medicine, agriculture, water and industry.

Egypt tries to spot Algerian militants

SALLOUM, Egypt (AFP) — Security forces have taken measures to block Algerian militants from trying to slip into Egypt in the guise of pilgrims on their way to Mecca, officials said Friday. Security forces will escort pilgrims and hold their passports when they enter Egypt from Libya at Salloom until they leave the country at Nuweida in the Sinai, officials said. "These measures are aimed at preventing Algerian militants infiltrating into Egypt," a security official at the Libyan-Egyptian border said. The security services had obtained information about attempts at cooperation between Egyptian and Algerian extremists. "The Algerian militants could take advantage of the pilgrimage season to infiltrate into Egypt and renew contacts with Egyptian activists," he said. Some 30,000 pilgrims from Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania are to start travelling to Saudi Arabia via the Egyptian border post at Salloom. The pilgrimage is planned for the end of May. Only Libyan pilgrims will be exempted from the measures. The governments of Egypt and Algeria are both locked in a bloody confrontation with militants bent on their overthrow.

Pakistani beheaded in Jeddah

RIYADH (AP) — A Pakistani was beheaded Friday in Jeddah after a court convicted him of smuggling heroin into the kingdom, the Interior Ministry announced. The announcement identified the man as Mohammad Ashar Wahed Bakhsh. It did not provide details on the arrest. Saudi Arabia rules by Islamic law, which prescribes beheadings for convicted murderers. Saudi theologians extended the punishment in 1987 to serious drug crimes. Most of an estimated 70 people beheaded in 1993 were convicted on drug charges. So far this year, five people have been executed on drug charges; the others were another Pakistani, two Nigerians and an Indian. The announcement on the beheadings always warn dealers they will face the same fate, stressing that the kingdom is determined to combat drugs.

German 'Uncle Scrooge' arrested

BERLIN (AFP) — A German blackmail artist who went by the name "Uncle Scrooge" as he evaded and ridiculed police for two years was arrested here Friday, authorities announced. The 44-year-old man was arrested as he made a phone call trying to set up a meeting place with his victim for payment of a ransom. Police did not immediately give his name. "Uncle Scrooge," as he called himself, since June 1992 had been threatening the German food chain Karstadt to place bombs in its facilities unless he was paid a ransom of 1.4 million marks (\$820,000). To prove he was serious, he set fire to three branches of the chain in the last two years and on each occasion managed to evade arrest, often under incredible circumstances that ridiculed police. On one occasion last January, he asked that the ransom be placed in a homemade train wagon placed on the rails of an abandoned station in Berlin. Once police placed the bag full of money inside the wagon, it was activated by remote control and stalled and went off track after travelling a short distance. On another occasion in October 1992, he narrowly escaped arrest when a police officer chasing him slipped on some dog turd.

Nigerian rulers to allow politics from January

ABUJA (R) — Nigeria's five-month-old military government announced on Friday it would lift the ban on politics from Jan. 17, 1995. An official statement in the inland capital Abuja said the second phase of the government's political programme would also be announced on that date. The statement said elections would be held on May 28 to vote for delegates to the government's planned constitutional conference meant to decide what political system Nigerians want. The statement gave a detailed programme of events between now and the end of the year when the constitutional conference is scheduled to wind up and said that would be the first phase of its political programme. "The second phase of the political programme is expected to be unfolded on Tuesday 17 January, 1995 with the lifting of the ban on political activities," it said.

British caught with drug thought it was gold

BANGKOK (AFP) — A British woman arrested at Bangkok airport with seven kilograms of heroin in her luggage said Friday she thought she was smuggling gold. A tearful Patricia Karen Hussein, 30, from Manchester, told reporters at a news conference called by police that her boyfriend of six months — whom she declined to identify — on Tuesday gave her a suitcase and an air ticket for the United States. She said she was to have been paid \$2,000 on arrival in America. Ms. Hussein said she did not suspect anything even though her boyfriend, who was to have followed her to Singapore later, disappeared the next day. "I didn't think anything about it," she said. "I thought it was gold and jewellery. I thought it was gold because it was so heavy." But Thai police became suspicious when she tried to board a flight Thursday at Bangkok's international airport because of what they said was her strange travel pattern. Ms. Hussein's ticket would have taken her to Singapore, back to Bangkok, on to Zurich and then to America. Her luggage also was unusually heavy, police said. Officers searched Ms. Hussein's bag and found the heroin in the false bottom and along one side of her green, nylon carry-on bag. Ms. Hussein, who said she is married but separated and has two children in Manchester, is charged with possession, smuggling and trafficking in heroin. She is to appear in Bangkok criminal court on April 26.

Teenager's mother delivers petitions in Singapore

SINGAPORE (R) — The mother of American teenager Michael Fay delivered clemency petitions bearing thousands of signatures to the palace of Singapore President Ong Teng Cheong on Friday. The five bound volumes, requesting that the 18-year-old be spared from six strokes of the rattan cane for spray-painting cars last year, contained more than 6,000 signatures, the mother, Randy Chan, said. The signatures were gathered from Hong Kong, Singapore, the United States and Britain, one of Fay's defence attorneys said. "This is obviously the last thing we can do to hopefully save Michael from the cane," Ms. Chan told Reuters. Fay's appeal was earlier rejected by a Singapore court, and only a pardon by Ms. Ong can save the youth from the cane strokes, which leave permanent scars.

100 injured in Amman soccer violence

By Munem Fakhoury
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — More than 100 people were injured on Friday in clashes and stone-throwing incidents during and after the last match of the 1993 soccer league first division championship between Al Faisali and Al Wihdat at Amman's international stadium.

The incidents started in the 75th minute of the match when Al Wihdat's international striker Hisham Abdul Munem was tackled by Al Faisali defender Rafeh Al Awadat.

Abdul Munem went after Awadat in the field and clashes erupted among players and fans, who started throwing stones and other heavy objects towards each other. Policemen moved in to end the rioting.

Damaged in the riots were several facilities at the Al Hussein Youth City Club and the two teams' buses.

No exact figure on the number of those injured was available. Official sources estimated the number to be more than 100, including eight policemen and several players. Other sources put the number of injured at 250.

Al Faisali was leading 2-0 when the rioting halted the match.

Policemen used tear-gas to disperse rioters damaging Al Hussein Youth City facilities and, according to the sources, several people were arrested for questioning.

The sources said police chief

(Continued on page 5)



A scene from Friday's violence at Amman International Stadium (Photo by Abdullah Ayyoub)

Rebel reinforcements advance towards Kigali

U.N. forces begin major withdrawal

NAIROBI (Agencies) — Rebel reinforcements advanced towards the besieged Rwandan capital on Friday and a three-day U.N. mission hoped for a truce to end the country's slaughter.

Sporadic fighting between rebels of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) and government units continued in the morning, the commander of a scaled-down United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR). Brigadier-General Romeo Dallaire, told Reuters.

"There is lots of sporadic firing going on around Kigali. It looks like the government and RPF are fighting it out," Gen. Dallaire said in a phone interview from Kigali.

Gen. Dallaire, a Canadian, said a column of fresh rebel forces had pierced through the captures town of Rwamagana, about 40 kilometres to the east and was now advancing on Kigali.

"They are moving from Rwamagana... they are moving westwards onto Kigali," he said, adding "it would be premature at the moment to say who will take the day."

The Red Cross says tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of people have been killed in a tribal bloodbath between majority Hutus and minority Tutsis that began two weeks ago after the presidents of Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi, both Hutus, were killed in a rocket attack on their plane.

Gen. Dallaire, whose forces are to be reduced to a skeletal 270 troops under a new U.N. order, said he hoped a ceasefire between the two sides could be arranged at peace talks in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha on Saturday. But he said he was not aware of who would attend

from the government side.

The rebels have agreed to attend the talks to be chaired by Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi but they insist they will only talk to the Rwandan army and not members of an interim government which fled Kigali last week.

Some 1,000 United Nations peacekeepers Friday prepared to fly out of Rwanda in the wake of the ethnic bloodbath that an international aid group warned would worsen after the U.N. withdrawal.

A U.N. spokesman said the rapid evacuation, ordered by the Security Council in New York on Thursday, was being carried out Friday and Saturday as the ethnic atrocities continued.

David Bryer, director of the London-based aid group Oxfam, said the U.N. pullout would amount to a death sentence for thousands of Rwandans.

"We are outraged at this short-sighted, callous decision," he said in a statement here.

"U.N. troops on the ground in Kigali are doing their best, in terrible circumstances, to protect lives... if the Security Council make them pull out, then many thousands of civilians will almost certainly lose what little security they have."

The decision to withdraw most U.N. forces followed two weeks of carnage during which 10 Belgian peacekeepers were killed by government forces.

Only a token force of 300 soldiers was to remain, shuttling between Rwanda's rebels and government forces to try and broker a ceasefire, U.N. spokesman Abdul Kabia said, by telephone from Kigali.

Mr. Bryer said he had been told by a senior U.N. military official in Kigali that "as many as 5,000 refugees currently in

Kigali stadium, which is just one of the U.N.-protected sites, have threatened to commit suicide if the U.N. pulls out."

"They said rather die at their own hands than be brutally killed," he said.

Mr. Kabia said small arms fire was continuing in Kigali on Friday but that the Rwandan capital was quieter than earlier this week when heavy artillery battles raged.

The cut in the U.N. force, which initially numbered 2,500 before Belgium withdrew its 400-man contingent this week, stemmed from U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali's proposal that it be either massively reinforced to restore order, or substantially reduced.

The 1,700 troops left in Kigali and from 22 nations, with the main contingents provided by Bangladesh and Ghana.

The U.N. chief rejected a third option of a total withdrawal.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said on Friday that 16,870 people had been killed in nine villages around Cyangugu, in southwestern Rwanda, during two weeks of inter-ethnic fighting.

The massacres were indescribable. Most killed were men and children," a UNHCR spokesman told Reuters.

UNHCR also said that 90,000 people had fled Rwanda for four neighbouring countries, nearly doubling the number in just two days.

The agency said the new figure included 50,000 Burundis who have returned to their homeland since the presidents of the two countries were killed when their plane was shot down on April 6. In addition, 12,000 Rwandans have crossed over into Burundi.

Feuds abort AOHR annual conference

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Members of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR)-Jordan branch Friday expressed disappointment at what they called the failure of members of some political parties to rise above political interests at the expense of Jordan's national interests.

"Some politically oriented persons acted irresponsibly," said Suleiman Sweiss, member of the AOHR's administrative committee, commenting on the committee's failure to maintain quorum for its annual meeting, which was scheduled for Friday.

Dr. Sweiss told the Jordan Times on Friday that a member of the AOHR "got upset" after arriving at the meeting place and started urging other members to leave so the quorum would not be reached.

"Seeing a number of people leaving the room, several other members followed suit," and the meeting could not be convened, Dr. Sweiss said.

The meeting was supposed to discuss the organisation's future policy, hold elections for the AOHR's administrative committee and assess the organisation's performance, which Dr. Sweiss said was unsatisfactory. He accused certain political parties involved in the organisation of using the AOHR as a forum for political work rather than a human rights institution.

Dr. Sweiss said that the meeting was deliberately sabotaged by some AOHR members because they resented what they saw as a "conspiracy" between Baathist and National Action Front (NAF) members of the organisation to monopolise the AOHR's administrative committee.

Abdullah Hammoudeh, a member of the AOHR general

assembly, told the Jordan Times that 30 members stayed away from the meeting in an expression of their dissatisfaction with the organisation's performance.

According to Mr. Hammoudeh, candidates recommended for the AOHR's administration would be "more fit to work for charity institutions rather than a national human rights organisation."

The proposed candidates, according to Mr. Hammoudeh, were people who "could offer nothing to the organisation in terms of promoting human rights in the country."

He said that the AOHR's outgoing administrative committee was not democratic and asserted that the panel should not be representative of a human rights organisation whose most important challenge is to ensure the implementation of democracy in the country.

The AOHR-Jordan branch was established in 1989.

Members of the organisation have had differences concerning the priorities of the organisation. According to activists, some see it as a means to achieve political ends, while others seek to free the AOHR from political activities.

"There is a determined body within the AOHR that believes in the organisation's right to independence, and insists on steering away from the influence of political parties," Dr. Sweiss said, noting that parties have the right to promote human rights within their own parties' activities.

"They have no right to turn this humanitarian institution into a political circus," he said.

Dr. Sweiss said he regretted that Friday's meeting could not take place.

Dr. Sweiss appealed to all members of the AOHR to devote their work within the organisation to securing citizen's human rights.

COLUMN

Balladur pledges 100m francs to fight AIDS

PARIS (R) — Prime Minister Edouard Balladur has pledged his government would donate 100 million francs (\$17 million) to research into AIDS after a programme on seven television channels raised the same sum this month. More than 33 million people watched the unprecedented joint programme *Allo! Against AIDS* shown on April 7 to fight the spread of the disease and public ignorance and prejudice. "The AIDS evening raised 100 million and I have decided that we will double that amount — the government will add 100 million," Mr. Balladur said in a television interview on the private TF1 channel. The funds raised by the programme were destined mainly for research into the disease. France has the highest number of AIDS cases in Europe. The disease kills 15 people a day in France. There have been 32,000 cases since the epidemic began in 1981 and an estimated 150,000 people are thought to be infected with the HIV virus which causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

Princess Anne to be 1st royal in TV advert

LONDON (R) — Queen Elizabeth's daughter Princess Anne is to become the first member of Britain's royal family to star in a television advertisement — for a charity. The princess will appear next week in the advertisement to promote Save the Children Fund's largest ever fundraising appeal marking its 75th anniversary, the charity said. The charity, of which the princess is president, was founded by a British woman appalled by the suffering of children in Austria after World War I. It now operates in more than 50 countries.

Editor jailed for column he wrote

NEW DELHI (AP) — A State legislature has ordered police to arrest and jail a newspaper editor for a column he wrote in 1992 saying that several lawmakers had received help from thugs. The Maharashtra state assembly unanimously passed the breach of privilege motion against Nikhil Wagle, and no court ruling is needed to carry out the order to jail him for four days. Mr. Wagle, editor and publisher of *Apla Mahanagar* newspaper, wrote a column saying several legislators had been helped by thugs during elections that won them seats and that they are hypocrites. The legislative motion, which orders Mr. Wagle to be jailed as "a political prisoner," said such columns tarnish the image of elected officials in the western state of Maharashtra.

Clintons talk about the challenges of parenthood

WASHINGTON (AP) — Fourteen-year-old Chelsea Clinton has inherited her mom's "social conscience" and her dad's talent for math, the first parents say. In turn, mom and dad have learned a few things from their daughter. In an interview with *Parents* magazine, President Bill Clinton said he is a better person and a better president "for having been a father. Parenthood ties you to the rest of life in a way and makes you less self-absorbed," he said. Hillary Rodham Clinton added that "our willingness to just learn from Chelsea and respect who she is, the person she was meant to be, has helped us a lot." Trading compliments, Mr. Clinton said Chelsea had her mother's social conscience and discipline, while Mrs. Clinton joked that Chelsea "certainly didn't get her math ability from me" and the teen had her father's "remarkable big mind and big heart." In the interview, the Clintons talked at length about the challenges and pleasures of parenthood in a rare public reflection on the daughter they generally try to shield from the spotlight. Recalling Chelsea's birth, Mrs. Clinton said she delivered by Caesarean section and Mr. Clinton was the first father the hospital let into its operating room for a birth. "I was awake and he was holding my hand," she recalled. "And then he started talking to all the doctors and nurses. And so it was just this kind of group experience. ... We would have loved to have more children."

Hamas 'clarifies' that no change in basic approach in move seen aimed at soothing dissent in ranks

By P.V. Vivekanand in Amman and
Wafa Amr in Jerusalem

THE ISLAMIC Resistance Movement, Hamas, on Friday denied that it was signalling a shift in its fundamental approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict by offering to recognise Israel in its 1967 borders and negotiate a peace agreement with the Jewish state.

The group, in a statement issued by its Damascus-based political office, sought to reestablish that its objective was the creation of an Islamic state "from the (Mediterranean) Sea to the (Jordan) River" and that recent comments made by one of its senior leaders were misinterpreted by the media to imply that it was willing to abandon its call for the elimination of the state of Israel.

It appeared that the "clarification" owed its origins to differences from within the group's ranks in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Islamist activists and political analysts in the occupied territories said Hamas' leaders, fearing political exclusion at a time when the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) are moving towards Palestinian self-rule in parts of the occupied lands, had rushed into making conciliatory statements in a bid to ensure their survival.

As such, Friday's statement was interpreted as a move to reassure those in the occupied territories who in principle re-

ject any recognition of Israel, whether 1948 or 1967, by reaffirming that there was no shift at all in the group's standing.

Several Hamas leaders said although the conciliatory stance was aimed at preempting isolation, it was also meant to show the Palestinian people that Hamas was capable of achieving better negotiating terms and a peace accord more responsive to the Palestinians' aspirations than the Israel-PLO autonomy agreement.

At the same time, the group's leaders have to take into consideration the opposition such a stand sparked among the young generation of Palestinians.

"Hamas' grassroots, like all the young Palestinian generation, are desperate for independence," a leading Hamas figure told the Jordan Times in occupied Jerusalem. "Therefore any peace proposal suggested by Hamas' high echelon will have to take this into consideration."

Fateh leaders who have maintained a secret dialogue with Hamas affirmed that they were aware of a "change" in the Islamist group's stand and welcomed it because it gave an added momentum to demands for an independent Palestinian state in the territories Israel seized in the 1967 war.

Sheikh Ahmad Bahar, an Islamic leader in Gaza, said the group was "willing to negotiate

with Israel to achieve Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian lands it occupied in 1967 on the basis of U.N. resolutions. But this does not mean that Hamas has departed from its strategic goal of liberating all of Palestine."

Friday's statement, a copy of which was made available to the Jordan Times, echoed the same sentiment. It said Hamas was committed to "escalating popular resistance and continuing holy war as long as the Zionist occupation forces remain in our blessed Palestinian land and until the liberation of all the occupied land from the sea to the river."

It said comments made by Musa Abu Marzuq, head of the group's political bureau, that a peace treaty was possible with Israel if it withdrew from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem did not imply any "concession to or acceptance of the Zionist enemy."

Explaining that the statement was issued to clarify the group's stand "in view of the popular and official reactions" to Mr. Abu Marzuq's comments, "Which were not seen in their full context or misinterpreted," the group said its "political programme" called for:

— Total and complete unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem;

— The elimination of all settlements and removal of settlers from these areas; (The statement did not refer to Mr. Abu Marzuq's call for Israeli

compensation for the losses Palestinians suffered as a result of occupation).

Fair, full and free elections among the Palestinian people living inside and outside the occupied territories to elect a leadership which will be the sole authority to speak and take decisions on behalf of the Palestinian people and represent their goals and aspirations.

Here was the key departure of the group from what Mr. Abu Marzuq had said.

The statement said: "If Hamas manages to win the confidence of the Palestinians, it will express and reflect the will of our people and mobilise popular forces to achieve the full liberation of our land."

(Mr. Abu Marzuq had referred to the possibility of a "peace treaty" although he did not say between whom).

According to Hamas leaders in the occupied territories, the strategy as outlined in Friday's statement helps Hamas secure a role in the present political process. Without such a strategy, they said, Hamas would be left alone unable to influence the course of political developments.

Sheikh Bahar said the political leadership of the group outside the occupied territories has also taken a decision to participate in elections to the self-rule institutions envisaged under the Israel-PLO accord, but no decision has been taken on how Hamas should tackle the PLO's domination of the autonomy arrangements.

Sheikh Jamil Hamami, another Islamic leader in the occupied territories, said the decision was not acceptable since "participation in elections will give legitimacy to the self-rule authority."

The immediate objective of the group, he reaffirmed, is to "foil the self-rule deal itself." Palestinian peace negotiator Freih Abu Medeni said Hamas had demonstrated political flexibility and pragmatism following the expulsion of more than 300 of its members in December 1992.

He said Hamas' peace overtures were a message directed at the PLO and not at Israel. "They are telling the PLO we will not sit at the negotiating table with Israel. But we will have a share in the cake by being accepted as partners by the PLO," Mr. Abu Medeni said.

Political analyst Mahdi Abdul Hadi argued that reasons behind Hamas' new stance were:

— If Hamas continued resisting Israeli occupation through rejectionist stances, it will be labelled the number one enemy to Israel and the U.S., and thus will have to pay a price it could not afford.

— If it drew closer to the PLO's political position and participated in self-rule institutions, it would facilitate implementation of the PLO-Israel accord but without granting it legitimacy, and it would isolate the opposition inside the PLO against participation in the Palestinian authority.